

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

No. 1255.—June 20, 1868.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

OUR readers will see that this number is printed from new type. But we think they will find some other improvements in it. It is not only that the type is new, but that it is set up by a new compositor. And yet not exactly so, for MR. P. A. RAMSAY, our friend of a quarter of a century, superintended the work originally, and for many years, and we are glad again to leave all the arrangements to his taste.

Thus relieved of much which has "vexed our righteous souls," we shall proceed to further and great additions and improvements, (over which we have brooded for years,) as rapidly and as largely as the enlargement of our sale will give us ability to do. And if our old subscribers will each take a little trouble to get up a club of five new ones, receiving therefor a copy of Horne's Introduction to the Bible (unabridged—in four large volumes), we shall commence the new year
—THE SECOND CENTURY—(Volume 101)—with renewed vigor.

LONGFELLOW.

On the previous visit of Longfellow to Europe in 1842, the following beautiful lines were written by his friend, George S. Hillard. — *Transcript.*

LINES ADDRESSED TO THE SHIP VILLE DE LYON,
WHICH SAILED FROM NEW YORK FOR HAVRE,
APRIL 24, 1842.

"Navis quæ tibi creditum
Debes virgillum, piribus attictis
Reddas incolumen, precor,
Et serves animæ dimidiatum meæ."
HOR.

O SHIP, beneath whose cleaving prow
The deep sea soon shall roar,
Were wishes wings, how soon thy keel
Would reach thy destined shore;
With eyes whose vision love makes keen
We watch thy lessening sail,
And covet, when that fades from sight,
The pinions of the gale.

No costly stores of gold or gems
We to thy charge commend,
A noble freight to thee we trust,
A loved and loving friend;
A heart that beats with generous throbs
To motives pure and high;
A mind that speaks in words inspired
The world will ne'er let die.

Strong be thy bolts, thy cable sure,
And stout thy ribs of oak,
Firm be thy canvas to resist
The storm-blast's rending stroke.
Far from thy path all perils fly
That haunt the watery world,
Till safe upon thy haven's breast
Thy weary sail be furled.

For, should the tempest's shattering wing
Thy stately pride lay low,
A shade would rest on many a hearth,
And many an eye o'erflow;
And many a hand would deck with flowers
The poet's funeral urn;
But we should weep the long-loved friend,
When they had ceased to mourn.

Wind of the north, with hollow blast,
Vex not the tranquil air!
Ye whirlwinds, sleep, with folded wing,
Within your caverned lair!
But west winds blow, from skies serene,
A keel-compelling gale,
And swell upon the sloping mast
A silent, marble sail!

Ye gales that breathe, ye founts that gush,
With renovating power,
Upon that loved and laurelled head
Your gifts of healing shower,
And jocund Health, that loves to climb
The breezy mountain-side,
Wake with her touch to bounding life
His pulses' languid tide.

Farewell, dear friend; we speak the word
With no desponding sigh;
For love is strong, and in our breasts
The flame of hope burns high.
The power that guides the wild fowl's flight
Along the wave-worn shore
Will bring thee safe, o'er land and sea,
Back to our hearts once more.

WHITTIER TO COLFAX.

COLFAX! — well chosen to preside
O'er Freedom's Congress, and to guide,
As one who holds the reins of fate,
The current of its great debate;
Prompted by one too wise, and good,
And fair, withal, to be withstood,
Here, from our northern river-banks,
I send to thee my hearty thanks
For all the patience which has borne
The weary toot of Bunkum's horn,
The hissing of the Copperhead,
And Folly dropping words of lead!
Still wisely ready when the scale
Hangs poised to make the right prevail,
Still foremost, though secession's head
Be crushed, with scornful heel to tread
The life out from its writhing tail!
As wise, firm, faithful to the end
God keep thee, prays thy sincere friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

—*Transcript.*

From The Fortnightly Review.

THE TRANSIT OF POWER.

WHEN, after many strange turns of fortune, the Bourbons were borne back to power by the recoil of the revolutionary wave, the astute Talleyrand put into the mouth of his master the reassuring *mot*: "Rien n'est changé. Il n'y a qu'un Français de plus." So when the tumult of the Reform tempest was abating, one heard, as it were, our modern Talleyrand, with courtly yet superior smiles, "educating" his party to repeat, "Rien n'est changé. Il n'y a qu'un million (i.e. electors, sovereign people, &c.,) de plus."

There is much food for sad mirth when we watch the discord of opinion which the new Reform has stirred amongst the wisest of our public guides. "It is a fleabite," cried the jaunty Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom £800,000,000 sterling of debt or a few millions of electors have no longer any illusions. "We have only made their existing majority a little bigger," growled the heir-apparent of Conservatism, with his incorrigible good sense. "Ah! Middle Class, Middle Class! so good, so great, so unselfish!" wailed out like Cassandra the great soul of Mr. Lowe; "educate, educate this sovereign mob, and at least soften the ferocity of our new masters." "Traitor! God will yet save the Throne and the Altar!" muttered the *Quarterly* in its wrath, mingling prayers with curses. "Niagara! Beales and ragamuffins! Pit of Tophet! and Chaos-come-again!" shrieked forth that old prophet—old prophet now grown unpleasingly shrill and, indeed, unpleasingly rude—not at all "the politest of men." And even Culture, like the dying swan, hath sung a gentle dirge, and, smoothing her ruffled plumes with conscious art, awaits the crack of Anarchy and Doom. "See," wails that transcendent bird, "this sad *canaille* wants to be up and doing. Adieu authority, philosophy, criticism, and art! Farewell the grand manner, the air of distinction—great Style is dead!"

Which of all these is the truth? Is it nothing, or is it the Deluge? Is it a party manœuvre, or is it the grand climacteric

of the British Constitution? This question it is now proposed to consider apart from the conventional dogmas of party. Let us rid our minds for a space of the cant of journalism and Parliament about representation and party, and ask ourselves quietly, What does it really mean? The wonderful contradictions between our public authorities as to the results of the Act are made still more wonderful by the fact that they are all contradicting themselves. It is Toryism which is so triumphant over a Radical change, and Liberalism which is dismayed at the fulfilment of its dearest hopes. The men who should be the first to suffer by the change are the least alarmed, and those who have got their desires are the most dissatisfied. The performers have all changed parts, so that we hardly recognise our oldest favourites. The position of the author of the Act, which has enabled him to "ruin the country," he originally obtained by the belief that he was the one man who could avert that ruin. Most persons think that the old prophet has been rather slow to recognise his *ἀπίστος*, and has done a good deal in his time to bring him into contempt; and it is a quaint conceit of Culture to restore Authority by majestic patronage of the unenlightened "Barbarian." The noble savage has a chance yet, it appears.

Let us try calmly to consider the actual political situation. It will be quite unnecessary to enter into calculations as to the effect of the new Reform in towns or counties, the mysteries of personal rating, and the minority conundrum. The Coppocks and Spofforths who work the stage tricks and sub-scenic trap-doors of the British Constitution are the only people who know anything about it, and even they do not know much, because, after all, electors are not bricks and mortar, and it is more difficult to calculate householders than to calculate houses. It is quite certain that a very large addition has been made to the constituencies, all from the wages-receiving class, which, with those previously on the roll, will give that class a clear numerical majority; or if well-informed persons insist that the small householders will not obtain a place on the register, this is, after all, a question of time and a matter of detail. Whether the new Reform is to give us half a million or a million of new electors, whether it is to come into practical operation in '69 or in '79, is a question of minor importance. The important matter is that, in the political balance, the working classes are legally in possession of a great numerical preponderance.

* Few things in this controversy have been more foolish and unjust than the coarse abuse of a true-hearted and cultivated gentleman who sympathises with the people, one who has done more than any living man to keep popular excitement within constitutional and out of revolutionary lines. The people even in this country have never had a more honourable, a more gentle, and a more educated leader. He is as much above his assailants in knowledge and moderation as he is in chivalry of nature.

The point to consider is, what does this imply? Because nothing is so certain a test of ignorance as to confound in politics numerical with practical force. In problems of pure mechanics it is usual to eliminate the question of friction; in political and social problems it frequently counts for from 50 to 90 per cent. What must be allowed for friction in the working of the new electoral machine?

Let us take the various items of the problem in turn, duly setting down *pro* and *con*. There can be no doubt that working men are not likely to arrive instantaneously at the mysteries of the sixty-one clauses and seven schedules of the Act which the House of Commons found it so hard to follow, and crowds of potential electors will not come into the register at all. This, however, is a question of time and of party organisation alone. As soon as the working of the Act is properly understood, and when any adequate object is open as the prize of electioneering energy, the new engine will be exerted to its highest pressure. If the strength of the old ramparts lies only in the chance that the invaders may overlook the breach, the impregnability of the fortress can hardly be looked upon as permanent.

But the real question is, how will the new electors act when they get to the poll, for thither by a short course or a long course they will infallibly come at last? To suppose that the chosen representatives of the new constituencies will be the mechanical reflex of their individual minds would be gratuitous pedantry. It never has been so, and it never will be. Elections are decided, not by numbers, but by forces; they are won like battles by strokes of fortune and energy, not like competitive examinations by the mere summation of marks.

It would be more true to say that members are returned by spontaneous and variable groups or knots of men, over which the constituency, as a whole, has at most the right of veto. It is so wherever the opinion of a body of men takes shape, whether as the audience of a theatre, as the panel in a jury-box, or as guests at a dinner-table. We see one or two energetic natures or social superiorities modified by accident, misconception, or intrigue, determine the result. Men never meet together anywhere, Convocation always excepted, without deciding like an organic whole, and not like an aggregate of atoms. And perhaps no single member of the House of Commons, unless it be Sir W. Heathcote, truly reflects the average mind of those who elect him. It would need a book to

trace the modes in which these forces act. Now power, now prestige, discipline, enthusiasm, wealth, loyalty, luck, and stupidity from time to time carry their man under favourable conditions. But of all these, except the last, the most constant influence after all is that form of power which is the necessary attribute of wealth when it has wide ramifications, and holds numbers of men in its grasp.

If these forces have always moved the decisions of masses of men, and if the most permanent of these forces be the power of wealth, what earthly cause will prevent their continuing to operate hereafter? The Reform Bill has abolished the famous compounder, but it has not abolished human nature. Wealth and its public influence will always be felt in any society, and it is quite right that it should be so. How much more in a social system so complex and well knit as ours? Every one who has looked attentively into the prospects of at least the forthcoming elections sees how very strong wealth and rank are certain to prove. So long as it is at all fair sailing, the bulk of the men who sit in St. Stephen's will be the same hearty and sensible gentlemen who now give the tone to that distinguished Club. And so long as that is the case, the pit of Tophet and Chaos-come-again will be adjourned, at any rate, till this day six months.

Then there is what in the language of the day is called the *residuum*. No doubt at all that a large number of the possible new electors are at present much below the intelligence of the average town workman, and may be moved by corruption, coercion, or ostentation. Perhaps for one election or so it will be found that the Bill has rather widened than diminished the area of bribery; and it is far from impossible that by their energy, lavish expenditure, and the personal popularity of many Tories of wealth or rank, a Conservative majority may be seated in '69. Watch the strength of the party even in the great northern towns, in Leeds, Liverpool, and Birmingham. Study the history of the last election at that model people's borough of Bradford. Reflect on that strange partisanship of visible power which the untalented poor so readily put on—half schoolboy, half-menial, as when a crowd on a racecourse cheers the colours of a popular nobleman.

So far *pro* the theory that things are not much changed by the Bill. There is, however, something to be said *per contra*. The great fact of the new franchise is this,—one which has been too persistently ignored. The class admitted essentially differ in kind

from the old. The old constituencies stopping short below the small shopkeepers, just took in the classes who form a recognised part of the social body from the capitalist point of view. They all had, and they were there by virtue of having, at least some small amount of realised wealth. They all employed some others. They all belonged to the officer class of the social army, even though the bulk were only sergeants or corporals. They all had a native veneration for property, and all notions, superstitious or rational, which our social history has accumulated round that idea. You could not point the moral of a duke's deer-forest without making the cheesemonger wince.

All this is changed now in the constituencies. There is now not only a large number, but a large majority of the electors who have no property at all. Many of them have not half-a-crown on a Saturday morning. They are simply full privates in the rank and file, and not even corporals. They employ no one, but are all employed by others. They never have been admitted as full members of the responsible part of society. The theory has been, that the State took care of them; not that they took care of the State. They would talk over the duke's deer-forest upon general principles, as they might discuss Divine Right or the feudal system, without any sense of profanity or indecorum in handling such a delicate topic. It is a wild calumny in those who pretend that the working classes are hostile to the institution of property, or will destroy it the moment they obtain the power. They have a deep and healthy respect for it in itself—indeed, a truer and nobler sense of its functions than any other class, for they recognise its duties. But the gross superstition in which its worship is surrounded here they do not share, that superstition which Mr. Mill so justly finds to be barely intelligible. They venerate property; but they venerate still more social well-being, of which it is the creature and the instrument. They have never been reared in that fierce, jealous, absorbing, and blind devotion to property, in all its accidents and phases, as a holy and ineffable mystery, such as we find it in those who have breathed from childhood the aristocratic or commercial atmosphere of this island. They have not been nursed from their cradles in the ever-present sense of its beneficent mercies. To acquire the true British dogged instinct of property you must be, as it were, "to the manner born."

As it is with property, so it is with the other grand pillars of our social system. The working classes have a real regard for our Queen; but, as an institution, the mon-

archy is to them a fact, not a dispensation. They are not disaffected towards the Constitution, but they have no vital and saving faith in it, and they never will have. They accept the *status quo*, and that is the end of it. The Church and the rest in the same manner. The beautiful mechanism of our glorious Constitution; the subtler mysteries of our administrative and parliamentary organism; the wheels within wheels of self-government, which our cheesemonger feels down to the sacred independence of his own weights and measures; the grand ideal of the parish; the knotted torso of our colossal law; and all that which culminates in the jury-box of our Saxon ancestors,—these are venerable things which he half-admires and half-wonders at, like the objects of antiquity in the British Museum, understanding here and there. They are things which he has never been called upon practically to work, and of which he has never in person realised the blessings. Thus he has none of our cheesemonger's abiding sense of personal interest in the "system." He accepts the system, but he is not of it. The "system," if you come to argue it, is with him an open question.

Now the want of a very definite enthusiasm for the British constitution would not be of any singular importance if the moral and intellectual tone of the new electors was at all the same as that of the old. But it is utterly unlike it. There is no greater break in our class hierarchy than that between the lowest of the propertied classes and the highest of the non-propertied classes. In all that makes political force, in breadth of view, in power of combination, in social spirit, and in loyalty to their leaders, the latter are immeasurably superior. It is just this immense difference in moral qualities between the two which men persist in forgetting. The trader, whatever his rank in his own class, by the conditions of his life is absorbed in petty economic details, is harassed by the anxieties of traffic, trained to ceaseless competition, jealous, cautious, self-contained, and intensely and narrowly practical. These are just the qualities which make the fortunes, but unmake the politician. What helpless puppets in Parliament are those keen men of business, whose wary genius has amassed fortunes! What a spectacle of mean stupidity is the typical cheesemonger crowing on his own vestry! The workman, whatever his rank in his own order, is just the reverse,—imprudent, generous, social, and imaginative. The only occupation for his brain is the study of public questions; his only strength is in combination; his ignorance of all the in-

instincts and habits of business makes him prone to visions, Utopias, doctrines; whilst his moral nature having no true opening except in domestic and social feeling, his whole strength is given to unreflective and unsystematised ideas. Half the bitterness with which the battle of Unionism rages between the employing and employed classes is due to the fact that the workman cannot conceive men seriously choosing to live under the system of competition, and the capitalist cannot conceive men honestly preferring the rule of combination. Both systems and both these characters have their great merits, and both are indispensable to the welfare of society. But political vigour belongs to the social, and not to the individual type.

The workmen of course have their special failings, looseness of thought, credulity, ignorance, and a *naïf* readiness to settle things off hand which makes thoughtful men shudder. These would make them very bad administrators or senators, no doubt. But they are not exactly political weaknesses. On the contrary, they just lead them to that temper of enthusiasm, energy, and faith in themselves which makes a set of men formidable. The result is that they are fired by ideas to a degree that no other class in the community are; and then they act with a decision which is startling to men accustomed to the intricacies of business. In place of that stony impenetrability to mere doctrines which marks the whole business class, the workmen have an overabundant proneness to them. It is the fashion to talk of the English impatience of mere ideas, and this phrase is just an instance of this stony impenetrability itself. It is the mark of the governing classes and the commercial classes proper, and of them alone. The great English brains, the poets, the thinkers, and the moralists are pre-eminently gifted with ideas, and the bulk of the English people have at least their fair share. The typical wooden "practical" man represents only about a tenth of our people,—just the classes which have been saturated with Constitutionalism and Protestantism. The brains and the hands are perfectly free both from cause and effect. When the practical Englishman stumbles against what he concludes is an idea, he at once cries out that it is a French importation, just as the *Times* denounces *amorcelement* (*sic*) if any one speaks of the land. The capacity for political ideas is not French, it is only democratic. We call it French because the democracy in France is more in the ascendant than here. But it

belongs to the democracy of Europe, and to the English as much as to any.

The English democracy, in fact, are acutely susceptible of ideas—indeed, are the only large class in England who are—and capable of heartily combining to carry those ideas into practical result. But it is not merely a capacity for ideas: it is a capacity for generous sentiments which marks their aim. The ideas which dominate them are ideas of social good, of a higher order of life, of mutual help, not always very wise, but usually vigorous. Along with this is a spontaneous turn for combination, organisation, and adhesion to leaders,—a quality eminently un-English, if nothing is English but what is middle class—but eminently English, if it is possible to be at once English and republican. In spite of all the merriment which it may occasion to some sprightly persons, I deliberately repeat that the upper orders of the workmen possess higher and stronger social capabilities than any other class. This is not identical with political wisdom, but it is identical with political force. This is really a matter on which mere literary criticism can give us nothing but *bons mots*. Those only who have known in personal friendship the better as well as the average men of this order can fairly estimate their value. The conditions of public agitation in England are unusually dangerous to the prominent agitators of all classes, and the working class, like the rest, would suffer unjustly, if judged by all those who profess to speak in their name. It is usual, moreover, to forget how completely the artificial training of the educated public imposes a conventional restraint of manner on all that they do, and that uneducated workmen are wholly unskilled in the art of casting a plausible veil over their weaknesses. The jealousies, the vanity, the intrigues to which statesmen give high constitutional names, are seen in the people in their crude and naked deformity. Nothing but long habit and study can enable us truly to estimate a class which society regards in effect as something like another nation or race. And opinions not based on such knowledge are epigrams, but they are not evidence.

It is this proneness to general ideas, this instinct of falling into discipline, and active sympathy with leaders, which marks off the workman so distinctly from the shopkeeper. They differ more completely than men in the same nation living side by side often do. Consider the intense enthusiasm which men like Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and

Mr. Mill awoken in the mind of the working class. It may give them some day a force before which the vestries will wither up like tow. The writer was the other day exploring a coal mine, and chancing to ask some grimy bare colliers, hewing away in the dim air, in what part of the workings we were, they told him with some pride that they called it the "Mill End," after the member for Westminster. A trifle this, but a matter for thought, that those rough hewers, groping all their night of days in those choking cells of coal could be thinking of the author of a "System of Logic" and of the pamphlet on the Condition of Ireland.

Again, the argument respecting the *residuum* must not be pushed too far. No doubt the lower strata of the new constituencies, chiefly in the small boroughs, have very dubious political virtues, and may for one or two elections prove very tractable indeed. But what a fool's paradise to trust in as a permanence! As the small constituencies are disfranchised, and the growth of education advances, and the power of the working class becomes consolidated, it is inevitable that workmen of all classes will more or less amalgamate. In ordinary times there would be much to keep them distinct. Great is beer, especially seductive whilst men are tolerably comfortable and have bread to eat with the beer. But let us see a great national panic or passion; wait till some fixed idea seizes on the popular mind like a religion, and where will the power of beer be then?

The desperate attempt of the opponents of Unionism to stir up the lower strata of workmen against the higher has proved a complete failure. It is very well for the governing classes to rely on the *residuum* now, but what will it be when the people are violently aroused—the time when you really want your *residuum*? King Bomba relied on his *residuum*—the *lazzaroni* of Naples; and they did him good service before the earth began to rock beneath him. But on which side were the *lazzaroni* when Garibaldi came?

This being true of the new electors, the old ways of managing constituencies must be somewhat revised. All the old influences of self-interest, habit, prestige, great as they will be, will not carry the weight they have hitherto done. The governing classes will have to learn a new style of governing. In stepping from the wages-giving to the wages-receiving class, they have passed into a new moral and social atmosphere. The old principles of human nature and our social order will be the

same, but the system will be essentially modified, and subject to very new and remarkable impulses.

In fact, the change which has been made is one which, from its nature, cannot be immediately tested. It is not that a great revolution has been effected, but that great possibilities of revolution have. Until the fountains of the great deep are opened, all will remain very much as before. Power and wealth will control elections; the rich governing class will furnish nineteen-twentieths of the members. The corrupt boroughs, the bribery system, the nominee system, the jobbing system will perish hard and slowly. Rank will exert its time-honoured spell, petty interests will divide constituencies as of old, and Beer will be king time and again. The Millennium that the Radical hails, the Chaos that the Tory dreads, are alike the creation of delusion or of panic. The whole thing is in embryo as yet. The workmen are capable of great transforming ideas, it is true; but the ideas are not forthcoming—they have yet to be framed, or at least to be promulgated. They have a great sense of adhesion to their chiefs; but great revolutionary chiefs are in their cradles or at school. The workmen have a native instinct for vigorous action. But the social force of Conservatism is at present quite paramount. Hence, with ideas still incoherent and unset, without immediate leaders of any genius, and a dense phalanx of material opposition before them, the new electors are certainly not likely to sweep the board; and to all appearance we may say that nothing is changed, but that there are a million of new electors, more or less—nothing, that is to say, on the surface.

Has nothing, then, been done? and have the rhetoric and the vigils of so many sessions been in vain? Yes! an immense work has been done. By transposing the legal balance of power from the wages-paying to the wages-earning class, a great *moral* change has been effected. The new power will slowly consolidate and feel its strength, and will be long in doing so. But in the meantime the barriers and outworks which fenced about the arcana of State are gone. The veil of the temple (reared by the Whigs in '88) has been rent asunder, and priests, acolytes, and worshippers are mingled together in a mass. The elaborate system of checks and counter-checks by which the great and good men who have governed us for two centuries kept public opinion at bay is all gone, at any rate in strictness of law. Through what a jangle of public meetings, of depu-

tations, of parliamentary resolutions, of press eloquence, of battling in committees, and lobbying of members did it need to pass a single acknowledged reform into law! Now, as by law is ordained, the people have only really to wish a thing done, and to mean to have it done, and it will be done. They are not likely to attempt it, but the process is infinitely simplified if they did. The old British Constitution, as invented by the saviours of society at that great and glorious era, resembled nothing in the world so much as the famous automaton chessman. In that ingenious toy the amazed spectator was shown a multitude of wheels, cranks, and pulleys, saw the clockwork elaborately wound up, and heard it move with a strange and rumbling sound. The pieces, we know, were all the time really worked by a concealed player behind, who viewed the board through the sleeve of the figure, behind which sleeve he no doubt occasionally laughed at his dupes. Mr. Disraeli now, who loves a surprise, has simply opened the doors, discarded the clockwork, and shown us the man. The wheels and the pulleys are not needed now; we shall hear no more that strange and rumbling sound; we see our man, and we sit down to play a simple game of chess—king, bishop, knight, and pawn—and no legerdemain for the future.

To sum up then the various features of this great change, we may say that they are indirect, not direct; future, not immediate; latent, not on the surface. In a word, it is a *moral* change; a new power, a new tone, new possibilities exist. The old class of men, or men very like them, for the present will continue to sit in the House, but under very different conditions, and with an altered sense of responsibility. When the legal supremacy in the State is vested in an order of men in whom, at least, is latent motive power so vast—men craving for something to be done, capable of blazing up some day if they find nothing done—perhaps something will be done. The victorious soldiers of Caesar are no longer on the Rhine or the Rhone, separated by half a continent from the majestic senate at home. They have not burst in upon the State, but they stand beside the Rubicon, whilst our conscript fathers anxiously deliberate in the Capitol. O, conscript fathers, be wise in time, for there is little to keep them from crossing that historic stream!

Having thus tried to weigh the force of the new element which has been brought in, let us turn to the condition of the old elements which remain. For it will be of

small consequence that the invading force is strong, if the defending retains undiminished strength. But does it? It is impossible to get over the impression that the Great Surrender of last year has in it the character of panic. Explain it as men will, there was the air of irresolution, distrust, and disorganisation about it which marks a retreat. Now in a retreat it is the first league backwards which is decisive, and is never taken till all *morale* is gone. The trumpets of the besiegers gave no sound so overwhelming—indeed, many thought it somewhat discordant and thin—and lo! the walls of Jericho fell, to the astonishment equally of those within and those without. A party which thus “turns its back upon itself” with no adequate motive, and with every appearance of not intending to do so, has given fatal symptoms of deep-seated weakness within.

It is a very striking, and from any point of view, a very ominous fact, how feeble the various forms of authority are growing in this country. Ministers, Governments, Parliaments, parties, all yield to a mere push, squeeze with a slight pressure, collapse mysteriously without warning. A ministry now dare hardly bring in a bill to touch a corporation. If the corporation struggles, a cabinet trembles down to its subordinates, and yields, procrastinates, or compromises. Governments are plainly unable to keep a mob in check, and are afraid to try unless they have twenty thousand shopkeepers as special constables to back them. The whole House of Commons dares not face a committee of indignant pork-butchers. A cabinet minister has a poor chance with a vestryman. And a gas company can flout King, Lords, and Commons. The very principle of authority for good ends as well as bad has been put to scorn by the weakness of men in authority. They do not believe in themselves, and they do not believe in each other.

Now the serious side of the loss of *prestige* to authority is that in this country it is practically denuded of real power. The Emperor of Russia might very safely inaugurate universal suffrage; and the Emperor of the French can hold his own in spite of it. The master of eighty legions has always his material strength to fall back on, if he gets the worst of an election or debate. A centralised bureaucratic system gives a great resisting force to the hand that commands the Executive. Our Executive has nothing to fall back upon. There are practically no reserves. The few bayonets and sabres here and there are perfectly powerless before the masses, if the people really took it into

their heads to move; beside which, it is an instrument that they dare not in practice rely on. A few redcoats may be called on to suppress a vulgar riot; but the first blood of the people shed by troops in a really popular cause would, as we all know, make the Briton boil in a very ugly manner. There are only the police, hardly a match for the "roughs," as we know to our cost. The Government would be mad which seriously attempted to face an angry people on the strength of seven thousand police staves. It was very easy to abuse an unlucky set of ministers about Hyde Park. But what were they to do? To have used the army would have been the end of the British constitution. There were seven thousand policemen, but what are they among so many? The Executive in this country has absolutely nothing to fall back upon but the special constable, the moral support of the cheesemonger and the pork-butcher. Real and powerful so long as the pork-butcher is in good humour. But wait till the windows of the pork-shop are being smashed, and all about a quarrel to keep you in office, and you will see the ungrateful pork-butcher turn and rend you like one of his own herd.

Executive system (if system it can be called) is in this country so utterly disjoined and weak that its material forces in resistance are almost nothing. Property has, no doubt, an enormous social and moral *vis inertiae*. But Government, as such, has singularly small material forces. Our greatest soldier in this age saw it perfectly, and so did Lord Derby last year. The fact is that our political organism of the constitutional type was based on a totally different theory from that of force at all. The governing classes never pretended to rely on force. They trusted to maintain their supremacy by their social power, and their skill in working the machine. Local self-government, representation of the people, civil liberty, was all the cry, until at last the tone of English public life became saturated with ideas of rule by consent, and not by force. Very excellent theories—but you must abide by them, and never dream of force, for you have cut yourself off from the right to appeal to it. The least suggestion of force puts the governing classes in an outrageously false position, and arrays against them all the noble sentiments of liberty on which they based their own title to rule. Club blusterers jeering at trades' unionists in Pall Mall may talk about grapeshot and dragoons, but men with heads on their shoulders know that an appeal to force would be the end of English society; and what is even more to the purpose, that there

is no force to appeal to. Hence it comes that so many proud fortresses of Conservatism have been surrendered at discretion by commanders who felt with a pang that their magazines were absolutely empty. During the American war the Northern armies were long kept at bay by some tremendous earth-works bristling with cannon. One night the trenches were silently evacuated, and the terrible pieces were found to be painted wood. So for years the governing classes had kept Democracy at bay behind some imposing ramparts. But one day the Reform League discovered that they were mounted with canvas and logs.

So that however feeble the forces of progress may be, they can hardly be feebler than those of Conservatism. But this feebleness in material strength is nothing to the feebleness of motive principles and ideas. In the days of Burke or Pitt, nay, of Castlereagh and Canning, there was a potent and deep enthusiasm for the system as a whole, and a real faith of its resting on truth and reason. Who has any enthusiasm for the system now? A few clever men find their account in defending it with purely professional zeal. But as a rule the men of brain are heartily weary and ashamed of it. In fact, the intellectual class is cordially disaffected. They despise the whole apparatus, they dislike it intensely, and they resent its thrall. The constitutional, Protestant, mercantile imposture they can in their hearts endure no more. The religion of Parliament, Bible, and Free Trade has degenerated into a self-seeking cant. They feel in how many things this system falls short of much that is seen in every continental system, how much more it falls short of any decent ideal. It is this stony impenetrability to ideas, of which the British middle class have made a sort of gospel, and in which the aristocratic class (who ought to know better) please to encourage them, that so revolts a man of any cultivation and a grain of imagination. Where is such an one to be found, not absolutely absorbed in politics or business, who is not visibly mocking at the whole apparatus in his heart? A lively writer of this class has opportunely transplanted the German name of Philistine. This happily describes that insurrection of the brain against the official and mercantile thrall which has driven those who believe in the force of ideas into closer sympathy with the people.

If there be anything in this, it is clear that the rule of this country will have shortly to be carried on under very altered conditions. There is nothing to drive any one into a paroxysm of alarm. It would be

most unreasonable to accuse the present or any other writer who tries to examine the facts as they are, of incendiary designs. We do not create this state of things; we only point to its consequences. The form and the organ in which these remarks are offered plainly exclude any appeal to popular passions. This is obviously not the language of demagoguism, but of criticism. The fact remains. The Government of this country has hereafter to be carried on under new conditions.

Now let us cast our eyes back for a few generations over the history of our actual parliamentary Government. In form and in name, since the "great and glorious" era, the elected representatives of the nation have ruled this country. But no man in his senses really believes that a motley crowd of 658 (or whatever else be now the magical number) have really *governed* anything. The grand commercial and colonial development of the last century, the Indian empire, the tremendous duel with the French Revolution, the great Liberal policy which culminated in free trade, were not carried out by an executive mob. Practically the governing class, a true aristocracy, possessed the entire control over Parliament and the executive machine. Like every other aristocracy with any life in it, they followed the great houses, and the great houses put forward and supported capable administrators. The Government accordingly was really and essentially an aristocracy; not in itself the highest type of government, as this was far from being the purest type of an aristocracy, but still a form of government quite capable of ruling a great country's destinies with some initiative and some vigour; and if with no great foresight, at least without collapse.

But of late the popular element admitted to Parliament by the Reform of 1832 has been steadily growing in extent, until their effective hold over Parliament and the Executive has almost slipped from the governing class. England is now hardly an aristocracy except socially, and for purposes of resistance. Politically, the governing class hold office, but they do not rule. What they did to the monarchy has been done to them. They reign, but do not govern. They can prevent anything being done, but they can not do anything. Their power of initiation is reduced to a minimum; their power of compulsion to zero. It has gone so far that they forswear as an odious imputation the suggestion of ever dreaming to initiate anything or compel anybody, and real government implies initiative as well as compulsion. Hence a House of Commons

and a Government which talk, and cozen, and procrastinate, and compromise, and smother everything in turn. In fact, under the constitutional *régime*, government was only possible because the practice did not correspond with the theory; and now they have changed it so that the practice must ultimately correspond with the theory.

Unluckily, however, this silent crumbling of the governmental edifice (as raised by the great and good men of '88) occurs just at the very epoch when a vigorous working machine is particularly needed. Direct parliamentary government is a magnificent institution in its own sphere. There are many things which it can effect in a very spirited way. The removal of ancient feudal abuses, the redress of sanguinary or effete laws, the abolition of monopolies, the *destructive* and equalising process of government, it can very properly undertake. The great and legitimate triumphs of parliamentary government have been all of this class. The conduct of commercial wars, imperial aggrandisement, the reform of our murderous code, the greater equalisation of taxation, the abolition of slavery, intolerance, and protection, are all works of this negative kind.

The tasks set to this age are very different. We have now to face the *constructive* problems of government, the remedial process of rule—problems of curious difficulty, impossible to anything but concentration and genius. Now these are just the questions for which direct parliamentary action is extraordinarily unfit. Our social and industrial system, under the expansion which followed the removal of its fetters, has thrown out new and appalling forms of misery, strife, and anarchy. There grows, festers, and reproduces itself that dismal pauper population, filling half counties, quarters of cities, a huge tumour in the body politic, which it eats up with its parasitical swarm. There is the housing of our crowded poor, forced by the palaces of wealth into closer and more poisonous quarters. How long is society to continue inactive in the presence of a disease so odious and so dangerous? The great sanitary question at which we have as yet but timidly nibbled, the whole question of preventing epidemics and providing the first necessities of health, grows ever more pressing and more difficult. Then there is the vexed question of the land. It is no use disputing it, the people have made up their minds that the soil of this country shall no longer be held on its present irresponsible tenure. Certain it is that the agricultural labourer is in a condition in which he ought not to be, and in

which he will not long consent to remain. The reorganisation of our national education, both primary, secondary, and superior, requires skill and care of the highest kind. The reconstruction of the whole legal system is a task at once gigantic and indispensable. Lastly, the state of Ireland is one not for trumpery revision of details, but for great and creative statesmanship.

These are the problems which await this age. None but a few zealots with a theory, no politician worthy of the name, seriously believes they are questions which are wholly beyond the sphere of government. It is certain that they are questions which Government cannot long neglect. For as civilisation gives us the increased knowledge and sense of duty by which great problems may be solved, it deepens and extends the violence of the disorders with which we have to deal. But these are problems of the highest order, requiring profound sagacity to eliminate their causes, patience to distinguish complicated symptoms, concentration to grasp the depth and reach of the problem, an instinct for adaptation to special conditions, a freedom from interruption to carry out a system of action, power to apply the remedies with force, and a recognised mastery of the situation.

Such being the conditions of the task, could human ingenuity devise a machine for solving it more impracticable than the current type of parliamentary administration? Let us clearly make it understood that there is no question here suggested as to the constitutional supremacy of the House of Commons. That, as a practical matter, is an admitted basis. The question is whether real government of this order can be looked for unless by a great modification in the course of parliamentary procedure. The system of *debating* (originally one would presume a mere aid to legislation) has grown out into a principal object, a great end in itself, with a special set of rules and notions which have no connection whatever with efficient law-making. Men are made ministers, under-ministers, and secretaries, judges, ambassadors, governors, consuls, anything in the world, by more or less readiness in putting together a few adroit sentences, or in just fitting the conventional temper of a crowd of men possessed with a sort of jealous common sense, and very moderate statesman-like capacity. The thing is too ancient a by-word to be dwelt on here. All that is now suggested is the doubt if the system has not been abused almost till it bursts. Can any qualities of mind or character be less like those which are needed to carry through the most ardu-

ous of political tasks? The pettiest detail of local administration may, at any moment, form the basis of an eloquent debate, and a corrupt beadle or a naughty midshipman may be the hero of a grand party field-day. Peddling little bills, just timidly designed by a practised draftsman to worm themselves in between the crannies of interests and prejudices, are solemnly brought in and fought over, and sometimes do come out as laws all mangled and distorted at the end. But what makes them one thing more than another, what effect they may have in practice, depends almost exclusively on the accident of party fight, or the adroitness with which the wires have been pulled by those interested, or the "business" power — *i. e.*, the manœuvring skill — of the member who chances to promote it. The probabilities of a measure becoming law are very like those of a horse winning a race, and are decided usually by the same arts of the jockey.

The leading backers, who are usually called ministers, have to spend their time, not in studying the matters they have to administer, but in meeting incessant onslaughts of factious invective. No one of them dreams of proposing what he thinks the best for the case in the abstract, but in finding what will collect together the strongest body of partisans. The atmosphere of the legislature is precisely that of a club when feuds in it run extravagantly high, and members spend their lives in canvassing to blackball sets, or to turn out the committee. The usual occupation of a ministry during the session is simply that of such a committee moving heaven and earth for re-election. The committee, of course, are not so imprudent as to introduce changes, or seriously consult the good of the club. They dare hardly discharge a drunken waiter or change a newspaper in the reading-room, lest it make another malcontent. To carry through the House even a simple and useful measure, and even to a popular minister, is a feat which tasks enormous powers, both physical and mental, utterly disproportioned to the result achieved, and almost no part of which is expended in the labour of devising the measure itself. The passage of a gas bill consumes about as much outlay of brain as might suffice to govern the Indian empire for six months. To carry an act is like submitting to the punishment of running the gauntlet in a Russian regiment. It will need a tough constitution if one is to reach the end alive after every man along the line has delivered his blow. Our great caricaturist gave us last year a picture of our first living conjuror in this

line performing his wonderful "egg-dance;" and we saw him deftly planting his agile toes, ever grazing and yet not cracking the scattered eggs upon the stage. That was a picture—a true picture—of what is now called a consummate statesman carrying a great constitutional change. Statesmanship is now dancing between eggs; and they win who crack the fewest.

It is plain that when such are the conditions to which legislation must conform, very few really statesmanlike minds will stoop to such a game, very few characters can retain their vitality, and no grand results can be by possibility issue. The whole atmosphere, spirit, and end of the system are artificial and alien to legislation. It is merely the mockery or parade of legislation, and not legislation itself. It is as vain and degenerate a form of the art of statesmanship as ever tournaments were of the art of war. The pride with which it is now celebrated and pursued by the men of the tongue and of the pen will sound some day as childish as the later chronicles of the tilt-yard sound to us. To mature a comprehensive and radical re-organisation of any of the great problems of State would be simply a matter for speculative interest; in the House it would be lost in the bottomless depths of parliamentary talk. To look for a sustained and expanding system of policy would be futile; for policies mean the watching the tempers of ever-shifting parties. To dream of a great ruler arising in that atmosphere would be indeed a dream; for rulers are so now only by flattering the caprices of an assembly. Unity, perseverance, energy, responsibility, are impossible where all is rivalry, change, obstructiveness, rhetoric, and subserviency.

It is the fashion now to accuse the people of all the "vices of democracy." In Parliament, however, is the true democracy; there are its worst vices. Democracy does not consist in poverty, nor even in numbers. The vices of democracy may exist without the excess of ignorance, or the excess of passion. A democracy exists when an inorganic crowd seeks to grasp sovereign power; when each man in it holds himself as wise a ruler as his fellow; when offices are won by flattering their prejudices and ignorances; when mere gifts of tongue and powers for intrigue can sway such a body to the right or to the left; when what they determine one hour they undo the next; when government is a scramble, open to every glib talker; when mastery, and unity, and continuity of action are hopeless from the jealous and vain-glorious agitation of units. These are the true evils of democ-

racy, which may exist quite truly without fustian coats or platform speeches; and exist, more truly than in any assembly of the populace, in the assembly of the British House of Commons.

Let men of all parties ask themselves if they honestly believe that efficient government can much longer be carried on upon terms like these. Those who have long felt it, as most Conservatives and as many Liberals have (views which have been admirably summed up by Mr. Lowe), fell into the natural mistake of supposing that the admission of the people to power would only add to the confusion. If I thought so, I should be, for one, the most resolute of Conservatives. But it is a mere misconception of the character of the people. The admission of the people will infallibly strengthen, and not weaken the executive efficiency of Government and Parliament. Paradox apart, the spirit of the working class is essentially, in the true sense of the word, less democratic than that of the capitalist class. They have less of the instinctive thirst for each man having his own way, which is the true sign of democratic ideas. They are accustomed to act in masses, and to act with concentration. They trust their leaders often blindly and obstinately, and thrust their whole collective power into their hands. They systematically delegate all business details to those whom they trust, and confine themselves habitually to the decision of principles. They are jealous of opposition when they have made up their minds, and warmly impatient of private obstructiveness. Look at them in the action of their Unions: whether you like it or not, you must admit that they have struck out a way of combining vigorous co-operation with practical efficiency, great delegated power to the minister with real responsibility to the society. Without saying that this is always the truest political virtue, it is force, and it is not democracy. It is republicanism; whilst beside it, the aristocracy and commercial class have become so demoralised by constitutional pedantry and rhetorical ambition that Parliament has grown as unstable a power as the democratic Diet of the old Polish nobility.

The introduction of this republican element—for such it really is—will enable Parliament, if it chooses, to modify its system, and will modify it in its own way if it does not choose. It is for the sensible men of all parties to see that the time has come to reform procedure within St. Stephen's; and it rests with them to use the new elec-

toral power for that end. If not, it will inevitably at last use them. From whence the leaders come in this movement is of no special moment. This is no party question, and Tories as well as Whigs may seize the occasion. If the historic aristocracy of England yet has vitality in it, it will adapt itself to the position, and again prove the right to that rule of which it now bears little but the ancestral dignities. It is far from improbable that one of the governing houses might yet produce a man with the nerve and capacity to become a powerful and popular statesman. It would smooth many difficulties and accord best with our traditions if it were so. But in default of this, should the governing classes throw up no competent chief, in course of time the people will discover one for themselves. To this it must ultimately come. For all the conditions of the situation, and every instinct of their lives, point to a rally round a capable Head. Slowly or swiftly, smoothly or roughly, we are tending towards a State with powerful chiefs, disciplined supporters, and real legislation.

Unscrupulous criticism, after its kind, may affect to see in this argument a plea for revolutionary violence or democratic imperialism. Those who choose to see in an opponent's language anything they please, are not to be denied that gratification by elaborate disclaimers. But a word to those who are willing to admit that a political writer may mean what he says. The whole change which has been described might be brought about without affecting the legal supremacy of Parliament, and without any constitutional enactment. It is a matter of practice, not of law, and can be properly accomplished only by the assent and efforts of Parliament itself. Any one who carefully examines at the close of the year the ponderous mass of the legislation of the session will at once perceive that nineteen-twentieths of its bulk consist in purely administrative enactments, such as properly belong to a responsible executive:—"An Act for amending the law with respect to the Accounts of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, and for other Purposes relating to the Metropolitan Police." Conceive our 658 foremost men dividing and haranguing about that! "An Act to allow warehoused British Spirits to be bottled for home Consumption." An Act to "Amend the Act to regulate the Keeping of Dogs." "An Act to regulate the Court and Office of the Lyon King-of-arms." O conscript fathers! with what sauce shall this imperial turbot be served up?

It is no answer to tell us that under our great and glorious system of liberty it is the proud boast of a Briton to carry self-government down to the cut of a constable's coat-collar, and that, until the Constitution is altered, even these details require the seal of Parliament. But, in truth, these and a hundred such measures during a session are actually debated and overhauled, go into committee, and go out, and pass through the whole apparatus of revision which an Act to amend the Constitution would receive. Amendments are proposed, faction fights are taken, and every device of obstruction is employed. Nay, the very bills are drawn with a view mainly to their passing this ordeal, and are first mutilated and diluted with a view to pass, and then are mutilated and diluted a second time in the act of passing. Few people with a grain of practical instinct would deny that administrative legislation of this kind would be effected in a manner far more satisfactory by a thoroughly competent minister under full responsibility to Parliament as to the results of his ministry. How can purely executive details be successfully worked out by a crowd of men, four-fifths of whom know nothing of public business, and each of whom is subject to incessant personal solicitation and pressure?

The evil would be endurable if it simply affected the details of trivial measures—Acts about dogs and Lyon Kings-of-arms. But the same evil extends from the trivial measures to the great. Measures which, in principle, can be carried and are carried ten times over in the House, in application are as regularly defeated by the enormous leverage which the forms of procedure put into the hands of obstruction. The abolition of Church rates and of Tests is annually determined by great majorities of the House, and as often rejected by dexterous manœuvring of parties and forms. A mere resolution for the disendowment of the Irish Church, apart from questions of cabinets and party, could be carried by a powerful majority. But Parliament, if left to itself, will be twenty years before it can accomplish this obvious and popular reform. Where the number of the legislators is great, the legislation must necessarily be petty.

Again, even this process of legislative trivialities only employs a fifth part of the actual labour of Parliament. Four-fifths of it are occupied by incessant struggles between rival parties, and real or fictitious attacks on a minister. Whether these succeed or not, they produce such an incessant wear and tear, and such an excessive tim-

idity on the part of the minister, that he is practically unfit for serious legislation or real administration. The puerile arrangement of offices, by which it is understood that each of the stereotyped parties are to take their turns in frequent succession, and each of the prominent performers in debate are to have their innings in due course, excludes any notion of government itself. During the last century Governments have been changed every three years, and sometimes every three months. And this at a time when patient and long-continued attention and labour are essential for the statesman in any high sense. The restless democracies of Athens or Florence never devised a more wretched scheme for making office a prize for the holder, and not a function for the public; and the class which passes its life in this ignoble game can thank God that they are not such as place-hunting democrats, or even as those Americans!

Every one of these evils could be remedied by a change in the temper of the House of Commons, without any dictatorship, or even constitutional change. Meddling in executive details, party fights over clauses, and constant succession of ministries, are not inseparable properties even of parliamentary government. They are only its diseases and excrescences. The House of Commons was once free from them, when it won its supremacy in the State, and it might free itself from them again. All that would be necessary would be that Parliament and public opinion should succeed in establishing in all administrative details absolute ministerial freedom with stringent responsibility in the minister; for the machinery of legislation, an intelligent decision upon principle, with a delegation of practical application to the highest competent authority; lastly, for the permanence of ministries, to accept the possibility of continuing an able minister so long as his strength and efficiency continued.

Some such modification of the parliamentary system is not alien to the history—even to the recent history—of our House of Commons. During the long ministry of Pitt, and to some extent during that of Peel, the Government of the country and its practical legislation were virtually the work of a statesman, and not of a clerk, responsible to Parliament, but not hampered by it, and really accountable to the nation. The governments of Lincoln and of Cavour, in other countries, have shown us how possible it is to place in the hands of a great and popular administrator vast executive power, whilst making him in prac-

tice the instrument of a legislative assembly, and intensely in sympathy with public opinion. Nor can any reason be produced why the people should not force Parliament in the same way to recognise the ascendancy of a capable ruler, to give him its hearty co-operation and support, and, without surrendering an instant its right to displace him upon manifest failure, or its own absolute control over the national purse, to watch, advise, stimulate, and support him, without harassing him with ignorant interference.

Visionary as such a proposal may appear to those to whom "Parliamentarism" has become a second nature, they ought at least to remember that "Parliamentarism," as known to us now, is a special product of this age and country, and is absolutely unknown and has never yet had life in any civilised society or in any other era than this. It is a purely artificial system, under which no sort of men ever yet have lived. The great body of the new electors have absolutely no taste for it, and no understanding for it. It cannot be understood in idea except by a special education in itself. It would be a profound evil if the recent reform has but brought another class under the influence of this unnatural system. Such a fear, let us trust, is groundless. The instincts and habits of the people all tend towards some of the more ordinary and more direct forms of political government. If Parliament will frankly accept this necessity, the issue will be fortunate. If it do not accept it, the movement will go on in spite of it. Should a great popular statesman ever arise, like Cromwell he will desire to govern with a Parliament if it will let him, but, like Cromwell, he will not be tolerant of a Parliament of Barebones.

It would require a volume to answer or even to state all the possible objections that can be urged against this proposal, which amounts, in fact, to nothing more than this—that Parliament should constitute itself an ultimate appeal and control in legislation, and withdraw from the direct assumption of ministerial duties. There are grave objections possible to every proposal in politics. But in this case, as in others, it turns on a balance of advantages and evils. There are those who set store by the direct control which Parliament exerts over the servants of the public. It is a balance of advantages. You cannot make two authorities simultaneously responsible. If Parliament chooses to be its own Home Minister, it robs the minister of all sense of duty and responsibility, and reduces

him to the place of a clerk. What would become of the army in Abyssinia if Sir Robert Napier were obliged to spend his nights in justifying every petty order of the day to a supreme military council, or what would become of us if Sir Richard Mayne could not arrest a Fenian without a party fight in an assembly of 658 metropolitan inspectors or police? A minister who has to wrangle out every administrative detail and every turn of a clause is necessarily not a minister, but an attorney.

It is much the fashion to console ourselves with thinking that our system of parliamentary procedure, cumbrous and dilatory as it may be, insures that the uttermost dregs of opinion shall be stirred and sifted; that nothing can become law until the most perverse objections of the most ignorant obstruction have been ground to powder beneath Alps and Andes of accumulated talk, until not the darkest corner in the thickest brain in the community remains yet to be enlightened. It is a proud boast, but it seems simply another mode of saying that Government shall always be in arrears of the dullest mind in the nation. So, too, the verdict waits till the obstinate jurymen gives in. So the democratic aristocracy of Poland had each man his *liberum veto*.

All these objections in the main resolve themselves into one—the claim of every citizen to have his part in the management of the State. This, however, is simply democracy, which in its true form is equivalent to government by the incompetent, and government by talk. Beautiful in theory and fascinating in practice as this is, the object of this paper is to ask if it may not be bought at too high a price. The task before the Government of this country is growing each day more serious. This island is in a position less assuring than any which she has held during the present century. The other nations of Europe, with much no doubt that is oppressive, have at least an efficient machinery of government of high scientific completeness. Into their civil system, as much as the military, arms of precision have been regularly introduced. Into our civil system they have not been introduced. Our cumbrous Parliamentary Executive is the Brown Bess of government, which veterans and martinets of the service may admire, but which really leaves us at the mercy of the improved system of the age. Or if in other nations the governing machine is still ineffective, they have not lost, as we have, the very tradition or taste for efficient government. We never needed it so much. The difficulties before us, both

within and without, were never so great. They cannot be touched without a hand at once strong, trained, and inflexible. The disease will yield to nothing but force, and a resolute use of the knife. The quacks are they who boast that they can draw the most obstinate teeth without the slightest pain. The gospel of *laissez-faire* is exhausted. Separated in Europe from any serious allegiance or bond with any of the nations, and with the gigantic preparations of the great empires for the impending struggle, there is scarcely a single object in Europe, not even the protection of Constantinople, for which this country could make her will felt. Our vast inorganic empire beyond seas has been established with marvellous vigour, and administered not without success. But India alone strains our capacity to the utmost. Like the rest of our empire, it will now have to be held under somewhat new conditions. The suppression of a people in latent rebellion in Ireland continues, but without relief, and they are sanguine who think that time, bayonets, and *laissez-faire* are sufficient to suppress them. Each year America is growing in material strength, and a few years only will make her an irresistible rival to England in material resources. Nor can the risk of war be forgotten. Thus perils and difficulties are gathered from every side. Without allies, with a scattered empire, with latent enmity in America, one of the three kingdoms in permanent rebellion, the social diseases to be dealt with acquire a fresh importance, and the future of England is not safe in the hands of parliamentary cabals.

If the great aristocracy which has governed this country for two centuries has any life in it, it will look to these things, and seriously consider how the safety and greatness of England are for the future to be secured. They must know in their hearts that by feats of parliamentary gymnastics that end is not much longer attainable. There is now an intellectual and a material solvent which have combined their forces. There is now in England what there was in France in the generation which preceded the Revolution, a philosophical class who have silently worked out a root-and-branch reconstruction of the existing society, and alongside of it a sense in the masses of unendurable material pressure. The moment those two actively combine the end of the old system is complete. The intellectual disaffection of the thinking class is no longer of the vague and flashy kind that amused the youth of the present Premier of England. Unlike his, it is not to be

bribed by the childish prizes of the parliamentary game. It is animated by a social, not by a personal motive. It has steadily reduced to a system the results which it desires to accomplish in this country. Since those results can hardly be obtained so long as the present parliamentary deadlock continues in force, it will seek to supersede rather than to force this entirely antiquated machine. Parliament, under this impulse, will resume its true functions under the constitution as the deliberative council, the representative of opinions, the

ultimate appeal, the sole source of pecuniary supply. The assumption of actual executive sovereignty is an anomaly, an absurdity, and in these days a danger. The accession of the people to power, untainted with the passion for parliamentary distinctions, just gives the material leverage which makes action possible. The intellectual element of organic change is ready. It knows precisely at what it is aiming, and that end it is perfectly resolved to achieve.

FREDERIC HARRISON.

From the Daily Advertiser, 26 May.

LONGFELLOW.

[Longfellow sails to-morrow from New York in the steamer "Russia" for Europe. The following tribute was read a few evenings ago at a private farewell dinner to the Poet, and we have obtained from its author permission to give it publicity, feeling that the sentiment it embodies is that of our whole country.—EDITORS.]

Our Poet, who has taught the Western breeze
To waft his songs before him o'er the seas,
Will find them wheresoe'er his wanderings
reach,
Borne on the spreading tide of English speech,
Twin with the rhythmic waves that kiss the far-
thest beach.

Where shall the singing bird a stranger be
That finds a nest for him in every tree?
How shall he travel who can never go
Where his own voice the echoes do not know,
Where his own garden flowers no longer learn
to grow?

Ah, gentile soul! how gracious, how benign
Breathes through our troubled life that voice
of thine,
Filled with a sweetness born of happier spheres,
That wins and warms, that kindles, softens,
cheers,
That calms the wildest woe and stays the bitter-
est tears!

Forgive the simple words that sound like
praise;
The mist before me dims my gilded phrase;
Our speech at best is half alive and cold,
And save that tenderer moments make us bold,
Our whitening lips would close, their truest
truth untold.

We who behold our autumn sun below
The Scorpion's sign, against the Archer's bow,
Know well what parting means of friend from
friend;
After the snows no freshening dews descend,
And what the frost has marred, the sunshine
will not mend.

So we all count the months, the weeks, the
days
That keep thee from us in unwonted ways,

Grudging to alien hearths our widowed time;
And one unwinds a clew of artless rhyme
To track thee, following still through each re-
mote clime.

What wishes, longings, blessings, prayers
shall be
The more than golden freight that floats with
thee!
And know, whatever welcome thou shalt find,—
Thou who hast won the hearts of half man-
kind,—
The proudest, fondest love thou leavest still be-
hind!

May 23, 1868.

O. W. H.

BROUGHAM.

ALAS! another fiery spirit fled!
Another mighty mortal cast his coil!
He who was great ere we were born, is dead,
After long years of labor and turmoil.
His was a life beyond the allotted span;
Success from earliest youth to hoary age;
Fierce strife, and contest as a partizan,
Calm, abstruse study, as secluded sage.
An orator, who made the Senate thrill;
A friend to all of suffering human kind;
A ready advocate, of dexterous skill;
An earnest student of great NEWTON'S mind;
A brilliant critic; an opponent grave
To all oppression which he knew or saw;
Friend to the poor, the ignorant, the slave;
And hater of obstructive forms of law;
A long, long life in earnest toil he passed,
For fourscore years and ten, and then as
young
In mind, full energetic, to the last.
As ready, with his sparkling pen and tongue.
And then, though some may think he played
a part
Far too severe in tone, in speech too keen,
Yet bore he still an honest English heart,
And strode through faction with his er-
mine clean.
Now from this struggle, in a tranquil sleep,
As sinks an infant on its mother's breast,
He leaves his lofty cares, his studies deep,
And gently slumbers in eternal rest.

—The Owl.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A SPECIAL MISSION.

WHEN a very polite note from Lord Culduff to Mr. Cutbill expressed the deep regret he felt at not being able to receive that gentleman at dinner, as an affair of much moment required his presence at Naples, the noble lord was more correct than it was his usual fate to be in matters of apology. The fact was, that his lordship had left England several weeks before, charged with a most knotty and difficult mission to the Neapolitan court; and though the question involved the misery of imprisonment to some of the persons concerned, and had called forth more than one indignant appeal for information in the House, the great diplomatist sauntered leisurely over the Continent, stopping to chat with a Minister here, or dine with a reigning Prince there, not suffering himself to be hurried by the business before him, or in any way influenced by the petulant despatches and telegrams which F. O. persistently sent after him.

One of his theories was, that in diplomacy everything should be done in a sort of dignified languor that excluded all thought of haste or of emergency. "Haste implies pressure," he would say, "and pressure means weakness: therefore, always be slow, occasionally even to apathy."

There was no denying it, he was a great master in that school of his art which professed to baffle all efforts at inquiry. No man ever wormed a secret from him that he desired to retain, or succeeded in entrapping him in any accidental admission. He could talk for hours with a frankness that was positively charming. He could display a candour that seemed only short of indiscretion; and yet, when you left him, you found you had carried away nothing beyond some neatly turned aphorisms, and a few very harmless imitations of Macchiavellian subtlety. Like certain men who are fond of showing how they can snuff a candle with a bullet, he was continually exhibiting his skill at fence, with the added assurance that nothing would grieve him so ineffectually as any display of his ability at your expense.

He knew well that these subtleties were no longer the mode; that men no longer tried to outwit each other in official intercourse; that the time for such feats of smartness had as much gone by as the age of high neck-cloths and tight coats; but yet, as he adhered to the old dandyism of the Regency in his dress, he maintained the old traditions of finesse in his diplomacy, and could no more have been betrayed into a Truth than he could have worn a Jim Crow. For that

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mere plodding, commonplace race of men that now filled "the line" he had the most supreme contempt; men who had never uttered a smart thing, or written a clever one. Diplomacy without epigram was like a dinner without truffles. It was really pleasant to hear him speak of the great days of Metternich and Nesselrode and Talleyrand, when a frontier was settled by a bon mot, and a dynasty decided by a doggerel. The hoarse roar of the multitude had not in those times disturbed the polished solemnity of the council-chamber, and the high-priests of statecraft celebrated their mysteries unmo-lestled.

"The ninth telegram, my lord," said Temple, as he stood with a cipher despatch in his hand, just as Lord Culduff had reached his hotel at Naples.

"Transcribe it, my dear boy, and let us hear it."

"I have, my lord. It runs, 'Where is the special envoy? Let him report himself by telegraph.'"

"Reply, 'At dinner, at the Hotel Victoria; in passably good health, and indifferent spirits.'"

"But, my lord —"

"There, you'd better dress. You are always late. And tell the people here to serve oysters every day till I countermand them; and taste the Chablis, please; I prefer it to Sauterne, if it be good. The telegram can wait."

"I was going to mention, my lord, that Prince Castelmuro has called twice to-day, and begged he might be informed of your arrival. Shall I write him a line?"

"No. The request must be replied to by him to whom it was addressed, — the landlord perhaps, or the laquais-de-place."

"The King is most anxious to learn if you have come."

"His Majesty shall be rewarded for his courteous impatience. I shall ask an audience to-morrow."

"They told me dinner was served," said Lady Culduff, angrily, as she entered the room, dressed as if for a court entertainment; "and I hurried down without putting on my gloves."

"Let me kiss your ladyship's hand so temptingly displayed," said he, stooping and pressing it to his lips.

An impatient gesture of the shoulder, and a saucy curl of the lip, were the only response to this gallantry.

A full half-hour before Lord Culduff appeared Temple Bramleigh re-entered, dressed for dinner.

"Giacomo is at his old tricks, Temple," said she, as she walked the room impa-

tiently. "His theory is that every one is to be in waiting on my lord; and I have been here now close on three-quarters of an hour, expecting dinner to be announced. Will you please to take some trouble about the household, or let us have an attaché who will?"

"Giacomo is impossible—that's the fact; but it's no use saying so."

"I know that," said she, with a malicious twinkle of the eye. "The man who is so dexterous with rouge and pomatum cannot be spared. But can you tell me, Temple, why we came here? There was no earthly reason to quit a place that suited us perfectly because Lady Augusta Bramleigh wished to do us an impertinence."

"Oh, but we ought to have been here six weeks ago! They are frantic 'at the Office' at our delay, and there will be a precious to-do about it in the House."

"Culduff likes that. If he has moments that resemble happiness, they are those when he is so palpably in the wrong that they would ruin any other man than himself."

"Well, he has got one of them now, I can tell you."

"Oh, I am aware of what you diplomatic people call great emergencies, critical conjunctures, and the like; but as Lord Watermore said the other evening, 'all your falls are like those in the circus—you always come down upon saw-dust.'"

"There's precious little saw-dust here. It's a case will make a tremendous noise in England. When a British subject has been ironed and——"

"Am I late? I shall be in despair, my lady, if I have kept you waiting," said Lord Culduff, entering in all the glory of red ribbon and Guelph, and with an unusually brilliant glow of youth and health in his features.

It was with a finished gallantry that he offered his arm, and his smile, as he led her to the dinner-room, was triumph itself. What a contrast to the moody discontent on her face; for she did not even affect to listen to his excuses, or bestow the slightest attention on his little flatteries and compliments. During the dinner, Lord Culduff alone spoke. He was agreeable after his manner, which was certainly a very finished manner; and he gave little reminiscences of the last time he had been at Naples, and the people he had met, sketching their eccentricities and oddities most amusingly, for he was a master in those light touches of satire which deal with the ways of society, and, perhaps, to any one but his wife he would have been most entertaining and

pleasant. She never deigned the very faintest recognition of what he said. She neither smiled when he was witty, nor looked shocked at his levities. Only once, when, by a direct appeal to her, silence was impossible, she said, with a marked spitefulness, "You are talking of something very long ago. I think I heard of that when I was a child." There was a glow under his lordship's rouge as he raised his glass to his lips, and an almost tremor in his voice when he spoke again.

"I'm afraid you don't like Naples, my lady?"

"I detest it."

"The word is strong; let it be my care to try and induce you to recall it."

"It will be lost time, my lord. I always hated the place, and the people too."

"You were pleased with Rome, I think?"

"And that possibly was the reason we left it. I mean," said she, blushing with shame at the rudeness that had escaped her, "I mean that one is always torn away from the place they are content to live in. It is the inevitable destiny."

"Very pleasant claret that for hotel wine," said Lord Culduff, passing the bottle to Temple. "The small race of travellers who frequent the Continent now rarely call for the better wines, and the consequence is that Margaux and Marcobrunner get that time to mature in the cellars, which was denied to them in former times."

A complete silence now ensued. At last Lord Culduff said, "Shall we have coffee?" and offering his arm with the same courteous gallantry as before, he led Lady Culduff into the drawing-room, bowing, as he relinquished her hand, as though he stood in presence of a queen. "I know you are very tolerant," said he, with a bewitching smile, "and as we shall have no visitors this evening, may I ask the favour of being permitted a cigarette—only one?"

"As many as you like. I am going to my room, my lord." And ere he could hasten to open the door, she swept haughtily out of the room and disappeared.

"We must try and make Naples pleasant for my lady," said Lord Culduff, as he drew his chair to the fire; but there was, somehow, a malicious twinkle in his eye and a peculiar curl of the lip as he spoke that scarcely vouched for the loyalty of his words; and that Temple heard him with distrust seemed evident by his silence. "You'd better go over to the Legation and say we have arrived. If Blagden asks when he may call, tell him at two to-morrow. Let them send over all the correspondence; and I think we shall want some

one out of the chancellerie. Whom have they got? Throw your eye over the list."

Opening a small volume bound in red morocco, Temple read out, "Minister and envoy, Sir Geoffrey Blagden, K.C.B.; first secretary, Mr. Tottenham; second secretaries, Ralph Howard, the Hon. Edward Eccles, and W. Thornton; third secretary, George Hilliard; attaché, Christopher Steptey."

"I only know one of these men; indeed, I can scarcely say I know him. I knew his father, or his grandfather perhaps. At all events, take some one who writes a full hand, with the letters very upright, and who seldom speaks, and never has a cold in his head."

"You don't care for any one in particular?" asked Temple, meekly.

"Of course not; no more than for the colour of the horse in a Hansom. If Blagden hints anything about dining with him, say I don't dine out; though I serve her Majesty, I do not mean to destroy my constitution; and I know what a legation dinner means, with a Scotchman for the chief of the mission. I'm so thankful he is not married, or we should have his wife calling on my lady. You can dine there if you like; indeed, perhaps, you ought. If Blagden has an opera-box, say my lady likes the theatre. I think that's all. Stay, don't let him pump you about my going to Vienna; and drop in on me when you come back."

Lord Culduff was fast asleep in a deep arm-chair before his dressing-room fire when Temple returned. The young man looked wearied and worn out, as well he might; for the Minister had insisted on going over the whole "question" to him, far less, indeed, for his information or instruction, than to justify every step the Legation had taken, and to show the utter unfairness and ungenerosity of the Foreign Office in sending out a special mission to treat a matter which the accredited envoy was already bringing to a satisfactory conclusion.

"No, no, my dear boy, no blue-books, no correspondence. I shook my religious principles in early life by reading Gibbon, and I never was quite sure of my grammar since I studied diplomatic despatches. Just tell me the matter as you'd tell a scandal or a railway accident."

"Where shall I begin then?"

"Begin where we come in."

"Ah, but I can't tell where that is. You know, of course, that there was a filibustering expedition which landed on the coast, and encountered the revenue guard, and overpowered them, and were in turn at-

tacked, routed, and captured by the Royal troops."

"Ta, ta, ta! I don't want all that. Come down to the events of June—June 27, they call it."

"Well, it was on that day when the *Ercole* was about to get under way, with two hundred of these fellows sentenced to the galleys for life, that a tremendous storm broke over the Bay of Naples. Since the memorable hurricane of '92 there had been nothing like it. The sea-wall of the Chiaja was washed away, and a frigate was cast on shore at Caserta with her bowsprit in the palace windows; all the lower town was under water, and many lives lost. But the damage at sea was greatest of all: eight fine ships were lost, the crews having, with some few exceptions, perished with them."

"Can't we imagine a great disaster—a very great disaster? I'll paint my own storm, so pray go on."

"Amongst the merchant shipping was a large American barque which rode out the gale, at anchor, for several hours; but, as the storm increased, her captain, who was on shore, made signal to the mate to slip his cable and run for safety to Castellamare. The mate, a young Englishman, named Rogers—"

"Samuel Rogers?"

"The same, my lord, though it is said not to be his real name. He, either misunderstanding the signal—or, as some say, wilfully mistaking its meaning—took to his boat, with the eight men he had with him, and rowed over to a small despatch-boat of the Royal Navy, which was to have acted as convoy to the *Ercole*, but whose officers were unable to get on board of her, so that she was actually under the command of a petty officer. Rogers boarded her, and proposed to the man in command to get up steam, and try to save the lives of the people who were perishing on every hand. He refused: an altercation ensued, and the English—for they were all English—overpowered them and sent them below—"

"Don't say under hatches, my dear boy, or I shall expect to see you hitching your trousers next."

Temple reddened, but went on: "They got up steam in all haste, and raised their anchor, but only at the instant that the *Ercole* foundered, quite close to them, and the whole sea was covered with the soldiers and the galley-slaves, who had jumped overboard, and the ship went down. Rogers made for them at once and rescued above a hundred—mostly of the prisoners

—but he saved also many of the crew, and the soldiers. From four o'clock till nine seven, he continued to cruise back and forward through the bay, assisting every one who needed help, and saving life on every side. As the gale abated, yielding to the piteous entreaties of the prisoners, whom he well knew to be political offenders, he landed them all near Baia, and was quietly returning to the mooring-ground whence he had taken the despatch-boat, when he was boarded by two armed boats' crews of the Royal Navy, ironed and carried off to prison."

"That will do, I know the rest. Blagden asked to have them tried in open court, and was told that the trial was over, and that they had been condemned to death, but the sentence, commuted by royal mercy, to hard labour at the galleys. I knew your long story before you told it, but listened to hear what new elements you might have interpolated since you saw the people at the Legation. I find you, on the whole, very correct. How the Neapolitan Government and H. M.'s Ministers have mistaken, mystified, and elanged each other; how they have misinterpreted law and confounded national right; how they have danced a reel through all justice, and changed places with each other some half-dozen times, so that an arbiter—if there were one—would put them both out of court—I have read all in the private correspondence. Even the people in Parliament, patent bunglers as they are in foreign customs, began to ask themselves, Is Filangieri in the pay of her Majesty? and how comes it that Blagden is in the service of Naples?"

"Oh, it's not so bad as that!"

"Yes, it's fully as bad as that. Such a muddled correspondence was probably never committed to print. They thought it a controversy, but the combatants never confronted each other. One appealed to humanity, the other referred to the law; one went off in heroics about gallantry, and the other answered by the galleys. People ought to be taught that diplomatists do not argue, or if they do, they are mere tyros at their trade. Diplomatists insinuate, suppose, suggest, hope, fear, and occasionally threaten; and with these they take in a tolerably wide sweep of human motives. There, go to bed now, my dear boy; you have had enough of precepts for one evening; tell Giacomo not to disturb me before noon.—I shall probably write late into the night."

Temple bowed and took his leave, but scarcely had he reached the stairs than Lord

Culduff laid himself in his bed and went off into a sound sleep. Whether his rest was disturbed by dreams; whether his mind went over the crushing things he had in store for the Neapolitan Minister, or the artful excuses he intended to write home; whether he composed sonorous sentences for a blue-book, or invented witty epigrams for a "private and confidential;" or whether he only dreamed of a new preparation of glycerine and otto of roses, which he had seen advertised as an "invaluable accessory to the toilet," this history does not, perhaps need not, record.

As, however, we are not about to follow the course of his diplomatic efforts in our next chapter, it is pleasant to take leave of him in his repose.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CHURCH PATRONS.

As the season drew to its close at Albano, and the period of returning to Rome approached, the church committee, following the precedent of all previous years, fell out, and held a succession of vestry-meetings for mutual abuse and recrimination. Partisanship is the badge of church patrons, and while the parson had his adherents, and the organist his supporters, there were half-dozen very warm friends who advocated the cause of the bell-ringer—a drunken little heathen, who, because he had never crossed the threshold of a Catholic church for years, was given brevet rank as a member of the Reformed religion.

The time of auditing the church accounts is usually a sort of day of judgment on the clergyman. All the complaints that can be preferred against him are kept for that occasion. A laudable sentiment possibly prompts men to ascertain what they have got for their money; at all events, people in nowise remarkable for personal thrift show at such times a most searching spirit of inquiry, and eagerly investigate the cost of sweeping out the vestry and clear-starching the chaplain's bands.

As to the doctrine of the parson, and the value of his ministration, there were a variety of opinions. He was too high for this one, too dry for that; he was not impressive, not solemn nor dignified with some, while others deemed him deficient in that winning familiarity which is so soothing to certain sinners. Some thought his sermons too high-flown and too learned, others asked why he only preached to the children in the gallery. On one only point was there anything like unanimity: each man who withdrew his subscription did so on principle.

None, not one; referred his determination to contribute no longer to any motive of economy. All declared that it was something in the celebration of the service—a doctrine inculcated in the pulpit—something the parson had said or something he had worn—obliged them, “with infinite regret,” to withdraw what they invariably called their mite. In fact, one thing was clear: a more high-minded, right-judging, scrupulous body of people could not be found than the congregation, whatever might be said or thought of him whose duty it was to guide them.

Lady Augusta Bramleigh had gone off to Rome, and a small three-cornered note, highly perfumed, and most nervously written, informed the committee that she was quite ready to continue her former subscription, or more, if required; that she was charmed with the chaplain, pleased with the choir, and generally delighted with every one—a testimony more delicately valuable from the fact that she had been but once to church during the entire season.

Sir Marcus Cluff, after reading out the letter, took occasion to observe on the ventilation of the church, which was defective in many respects. There was a man in King Street—he thought his name was Hammond or something like Hammond, but it might be Fox—who had invented a self-revolving pane for church windows; it was perfectly noiseless, and the expense a mere trifle, though it required to be adjusted by one of the patentee's own people; some mistakes having occurred by blundering adaptation, by which two persons had been asphyxiated at Redhill.

The orator was here interrupted by Mrs. Trumpler, who stoutly affirmed that she had come there that day at great inconvenience, and was in nowise prepared to listen to a discourse upon draughts, or the rival merits of certain plumbers. There were higher considerations than these that might occupy them, and she wished to know if M. L'Estrange was prepared to maintain the harsh, and she must say the ungenerous and unscholarlike view he had taken of the character of Judas. If so, she withdrew her subscription, but added that she would also in a pamphlet explain to the world the reason of her retirement, as well as the other grounds of complaint she had against the chaplain.

One humble contributor of fifteen francs alleged that, though nut-crackers were a useful domestic implement, they formed an unpleasant accompaniment to the hymns, and occasionally startled devotionally minded persons during the service; and he

added his profound regret at the seeming apathy of the clergyman to the indecent interruption; indeed, he had seen the parson sitting in the reading-desk, while these disturbances continued, to all appearance unmoved and indifferent.

A retired victualler, Mr. Mowser, protested that to see the walk of the clergyman, as he came up the aisle, “was enough for him;” and he had only come to the meeting to declare that he himself had gone over to the sect of the Nuremberg Christians, who, at least, were humble-minded and lowly, and who thought their pastor handsomely provided for with a thousand francs a year and a suit of black clothes at Christmas.

In a word, there was much discontent abroad, and a very general opinion seemed to prevail that, what with the increasing dearness of butcher's meat, and an extra penny lately added to the income tax, it behoved every one to see what wise and safe economy could be introduced into their affairs. It is needless to say how naturally it suggested itself to each that the church subscription was a retrenchment at once practicable and endurable.

Any one who wishes to convince himself how dear to the Protestant heart is the right of private judgment, has only to attend a vestry meeting of a church supported on the voluntary system. It is the very grandest assertion of that great principle. There is not a man there represented by ten francs' annual subscription who has not very decided opinions of the doctrine he requires for his money; and thus, while no one agreed with his neighbour, all concurred in voting that they deemed the chaplain had not fulfilled their expectations, and that they reserved their right to contribute or not for the ensuing year, as future thought and consideration should determine.

L'Estrange had gone in to Rome to meet Augustus Bramleigh and Ellen, who were coming to pass the Christmas with him, when Sir Marcus Cluff called to announce this unpleasant resolution of the church patrons.

“Perhaps I could see Miss L'Estrange?” said he to the servant, who had said her master was from home.

Julia was seated working at the window as Sir Marcus entered the room.

“I hope I do not come at an unseemly hour; I scarcely know the time one ought to visit here,” he began, as he fumbled to untie the strings of his respirator. “How nice and warm your room is; and a south aspect, too. Ah! that's what my house fails in.”

“I'm so sorry my brother is not at home,

Sir Marcus. He will regret not meeting you."

"And I'm sorry, too. I could have broken the bad news to him, perhaps, better than—I mean—oh, dear! if I begin coughing, I shall never cease. Would you mind my taking my drops? They are only aconite and lettuce; and if I might ask for a little fresh water. I'm so sorry to be troublesome."

Though all anxiety to know to what bad news he referred, she hastened to order the glass of water he desired, and calmly resumed her seat.

"It's spasmodic, this cough. I don't know if that be any advantage, or the reverse; but the doctor says 'only spasmodic,' which would lead one to suppose it might be worse. Would you do me the great favor to drop thirty-five, be sure only thirty-five, of these? I hope your hand does not shake."

"No, Sir Marcus. It is very steady."

"What a pretty hand it is. How taper your fingers are, but you have these dimples at the knuckles they say are such signs of cruelty."

"Oh, Sir Marcus!"

"Yes, they say so. Nana Saib had them, and that woman—there, there, you have given me thirty-seven."

"No, I assure you, Sir Marcus; only thirty-five. I'm a practised hand at dropping medicine. My brother used to have violent headaches."

"And you always measured his drops, did you?"

"Always. I am quite a clever nurse, I assure you."

"Oh, dear! do you say so?" and as he laid down his glass he looked at her with an expression of interest and admiration, which pushed her gravity to its last limit.

"I don't believe a word about the cruelty they ascribe to those dimples. I pledge you my word of honor I do not," said he, seriously.

"I'm sincerely glad to hear you say so," said she, trying to seem grave.

"And is your brother much of an invalid?"

"Not now. The damp climate of Ireland gave him headaches, but he rarely has them here."

"Ah, and you have such a quiet way of moving about; that gentle gliding step, so soothing to the sick. Oh, you don't know what a boon it is; and the common people never have it, nor can they acquire it. When you went to ring the bell, I said to myself, 'That's it! that's what all the teaching in the world cannot impart.'"

"You will make me very vain, Sir Mar-

cus. All the more that you give me credit for merits I never suspected."

"Have you a cold hand?" asked he, with a look of eagerness.

"I really don't know. Perhaps I have."

"If I might dare. Ah," said he, with much feeling, as he touched her hand in the most gentle manner—"Ah! that is the greatest gift of nature. A small hand, perfect in form, beautiful in colour, and cold as marble."

Julia could resist no longer, but laughed out one of those pleasant merry laughs whose music makes an echo in the heart.

"I know well enough what you are saying to yourself. I think I hear you muttering, 'What an original, what a strange creature it is;' and so I am, I won't deny it. One who has been an invalid for eighteen years; eighteen years passed in the hard struggle with an indolent alimentary system, for they say it's no more. There's nothing organic; nothing whatever. Structurally, said Dr. Borcas of Leamington, structurally you are as sound as a roach. I don't fully appreciate the comparison, but I take it the roach must be a very healthy fish. Oh, here's your brother coming across the garden. I wish he had not come just yet; I had a—no matter, perhaps you'd permit me to have a few words with you to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, or whenever you like, Sir Marcus; but pray forgive me if I run away now to ask my brother if our visitors have come."

"They'll be here to-morrow evening, Ju," said George, as she rushed to meet him. "Is that Cluff's phaeton I see at the gate?"

"Yes; the tiresome creature has been here the last hour. I'll not go back to him. You must take your share now."

By the time L'Estrange entered the room, Sir Marcus had replaced his respirator, and enveloped himself in two of his overcoats and a fur boa. "Oh, here you are," said he, speaking with much difficulty. "I can't talk now; it brings on the cough. Come over in the evening, and I'll tell you about it."

"About what, pray?" asked the other curtly.

"There's no use being angry. It only hurries the respiration, and chokes the pulmonary vessels. They won't give a pence—not one of them. They say that you don't preach St. Paul—that you think too much about works. I don't know what they don't say; but come over about seven."

"Do you mean that the subscribers have withdrawn from the church?"

Sir Marcus had not breath for further discussion, but made a gesture of assent with his head.

L'Estrange sank down on a chair overpowered, nor did he speak to, or notice, the other as he withdrew.

"Are you ill, dearest George?" said Julia, as she saw her brother pale and motionless on the chair. "Are you ill?"

"They've all withdrawn from the church, Julia. Cluff says they are dissatisfied with me, and will contribute no longer."

"I don't believe it's so bad as he says. I'm sure it's not. They cannot be displeased with you, George. It's some mere passing misconception. You know how they're given to these little bickerings and squabbles; but they have ever been kind and friendly to you."

"You always give me courage, Ju; and even when I have little heart for it, I like it."

"Come in to dinner now, George; and if I don't make you laugh, it's a wonder to me. I have had such a scene with Sir Marcus as might have graced a comedy."

It was not an easy task to rally her brother back to good spirits, but she did succeed at last. "And now," said she, as she saw him looking once more at ease and cheerful, "what news of the Bramleighs — are they ever to come?"

"They'll be here to-morrow evening, Ju. Unless they were quite sure the Culduffs had left for Naples, they would not venture here; and perhaps they were so far in the right."

"I don't think so; at least, if I had been Nelly, I'd have given anything for such an opportunity of presenting myself to my distinguished relations and terrifying them by the thought of those attentions that they could neither give me nor deny me."

"No, no, Julia, nothing of the kind; there would be malice in that."

"Do I deny it? A great deal of malice in it; and there's no good comedy in life without a slight flavour of spitefulness. Oh, my poor dear George, what a deep sigh that was! How sad it is to think, that all your example and all your precept do so little, and that your sister acquires nothing by your companionship except the skill to torment you."

"But why will you say those things that you don't mean — that you couldn't feel?"

"I believe I do it, George, just the way a horse bounds and rears and buck-leaps. It does not help him on his road, but it lightens the journey; and then it offers such happy occasion for the exercise of that nice light hand of my brother to check

these aberrations. You ought to be eternally grateful for the way I develop your talents as a moralist — I was going to say a horse-breaker."

"I suppose," said he, after a moment's silence, "I ought to go over to Sir Marcus and learn from him exactly how matters stand here."

"No, no; never mind him — at least, not this evening. Bores are bad enough in the morning, but after dinner, when one really wants to think well of their species, they are just intolerable; besides, I composed a little song while you were away, and I want you to hear it, and then you know we must have some serious conversation about Sir Marcus; he is to be here to-morrow."

"I declare, Ju —"

"There, don't declare, but open the pianoforte, and light the candles; and as I mean to sing for an hour at least, you may have that cigar that you looked so lovingly at, and put back into the case. Ain't I good for you, as the French say?"

"Very good, too good for me," said he, kissing her, and now every trace of his sorrow was gone, and he looked as happy as might be.

CHAPTER XLV.

A PLEASANT DINNER.

PRUDENT people will knit their brows and wise people shake their heads at the bare mention of it, but I cannot help saying that there is a wonderful fascination in those little gatherings which bring a few old friends around the same board, who, forgetting all the little pinchings and straits of narrow fortune, give themselves up for once to enjoyment without a thought for the cost or a care for the morrow. I do not want this to pass for sound morality, nor for a discreet line of conduct; I only say that in the spirit that can subdue every sentiment that would jar on the happiness of the hour there is a strength and vitality that shows this feeling is not born of mere conviviality, but of something deeper, and truer, and heartier.

"If we only had poor Jack here," whispered Augustus Bramleigh to L'Estrange, as they drew around the Christmas fire. "I'd say this was the happiest hearth I know of."

"And have you no tidings of him?" said L'Estrange, in the same low tone; for, although the girls were in eager talk together, he was afraid Julia might overhear what was said.

"None, except that he sailed from China on board an American clipper for Smyrna,

and I am now waiting for news from the Consul there, to whom I have written, enclosing a letter for him."

"And he is serving as a sailor?"

Bramleigh nodded.

"What is the mysterious conversation going on there?" said Julia. "How grave George looks, and Mr. Bramleigh seems overwhelmed with a secret of importance."

"I guess it," said Nelly, laughing. "Your brother has been relating your interview with Sir Marcus Cluff, and they are speculating on what is to come of it."

"Oh, that reminds me," cried L'Estrange suddenly, "Sir Marcus's servant brought me a letter just as I was dressing for dinner. Here it is. What a splendid seal—supporters, too! Have I permission to read?"

"Read, read by all means," cried Julia.

"DEAR SIR,—If I could have sufficiently conquered my bronchitis as to have ventured out this morning, I would have made you my personal apologies for not having received you last night when you did me the honour to call, as well as opened to you by word of mouth what I am now reduced to convey by pen."

"He is just as prolix as when he talks," said Julia.

"It's a large hand, however, and easy to read. 'My old enemy the larynx—more in fault than even the bronchial tubes—is again in arms——'"

"Oh, do spare us his anatomical disquisition, George. Skip him down to where he proposes for me."

"But it is what he does not. You are not mentioned in the whole of it. It is all about Church matters. It is an explanation of why every one has withdrawn his subscription and left the establishment, and why he alone is faithful and willing to contribute, even to the extent of five pounds additional——"

"This is too heartless by half; the man has treated me shamefully."

"I protest I think so too," said Nelly, with a mock seriousness; "he relies upon your brother's gown for his protection."

"Shall I have him out? But, by the way, why do you call me Mr. Bramleigh? Wasn't I Augustus—or rather Gusto—when we met last?"

"I don't think so; so well as I remember, I treated you with great respect, dashed with a little bit of awe. You and your elder sister were always 'personages' to me."

"I cannot understand that. I can easily imagine Temple inspiring that deference you speak of."

"You were the true Prince, however,

and I had all Falstaff's reverence for the true Prince."

"And yet you see after all I am like to turn out only a Pretender."

"By the way, the pretender is here; I mean—if it be not a bull to say it—the real pretender, Count Pracontal."

"Count Pracontal de Bramleigh, George," said Julia, correcting him. "It is the drollest mode of assuming a family name I ever heard of."

"What is he like?" asked Ellen.

"Like a very well-bred Frenchman of the worst school of French manners: he has none of that graceful ease and that placid courtesy of the past period, but he has abundance of the volatile readiness and showy smartness of the present day. They are a wonderful race, however, and their smattering is better than other men's learning."

"I want to see him," said Augustus.

"Well," broke in L'Estrange, "Lady Augusta writes to me to say that he wants to see *you*."

"What does Lady Augusta know of him?"

"Heaven knows," cried Julia; "but they are always together; their rides over the Campagna furnish just now the chief scandal of Rome. George, you may see, looks very serious and rebukeful about it; but, if the truth were told, there's a little jealousy at the root of his morality."

"I declare, Julia, this is too bad."

"Too true, also, my dear George. Will you deny that you used to ride out with her nearly every evening in the summer, rides that began at sunset and ended—I was always asleep when you came home, and so I never knew when they ended."

"Was she very agreeable?" asked Nelly, with the faintest tinge of sharpness in her manner.

"The most—what shall I call it?—inconsequent woman I ever met, mixing up things the most dissimilar together, and never dwelling for an instant on anything."

"How base men are," said Julia, with mock reproach in her voice. "This is the way he talks of a woman he absolutely persecuted with attentions the whole season. Would you believe it, Nelly, we cut up our nice little garden to make a school to train her horse in?"

Whether it was that some secret intelligence was rapidly conveyed from Julia as she spoke to Nelly, or that the latter of herself caught up the quizzing spirit of her attack, but the two girls burst out laughing, and George blushed deeply, in shame and irritation.

"First of all," said he, stammering with confusion, "she had a little Arab, the wickedest animal I ever saw. It wasn't safe to approach him; he struck out with his fore-legs —"

"Come, Nelly," said Julia, rising, "we'll go into the drawing-room, and leave George to explain how he tamed the Arab and captivated the Arab's mistress, for your brother might like to learn the secret. You'll join us, gentlemen, when you wish for coffee."

"That was scarcely fair, Julia dear," said Nelly, when they were alone. "Your banter is sometimes too sharp for him."

"I can't help it, dearest—it is part of my nature. When I was a child, they could not take me to a wild-beast show, for I would insist on poking straws at the tiger—not that poor dear George has much 'tiger' in him. But do you know, Nelly," said she, in a graver tone, "that, when people are very poor, when their daily lives are beset by the small accidents of narrow fortune, there is a great philosophy in a little banter? You brush away many an annoyance by seeming to feel it matter for drollery, which, if taken seriously, might have made you fretful and peevish."

"I never suspected there was method in your madness, Ju," said Nelly, smiling.

"Nor was there, dearest; the explanation was almost an after-thought. But come now and tell me about yourselves."

"There is really little to tell. Augustus never speaks to me now of business matters. I think I can see that he is not fully satisfied with himself; but, rather than show weakness or hesitation, he is determined to go on as he began."

"And are you really going to this dreary place?"

"He says so."

"Would any good come, I wonder, of bringing your brother and Pracontal together? They are both men of high and generous feelings. Each seems to think that there ought to be some other settlement than a recourse to lawyers. Do you think he would refuse to meet Pracontal?"

"That is a mere chance. There are days he would not listen to such a proposal, and there are times he would accept it heartily; but the suggestion must not come from me. With all his love for me, he rather thinks that I secretly disapprove of what he has done, and would reverse it if I knew how."

"What if I were to hint at it? He already said he wished to see him. This might be mere curiosity, however. What if I were to say, 'Why not meet Pracon-

tal? Why not see what manner of man he is? There is nothing more true than the saying that half the dislikes people conceive against each other would give way if they would condescend to become acquainted.'"

"As I have just said, it is a mere chance whether he would consent, and then —"

"Oh, I know! It would be also a chance what might come of it."

Just as she said this, the young men entered the room, with smiling faces, and apparently in high good-humour.

"Do you know the plan we've just struck out?" cried Bramleigh. "George is to come and live at Cattaro. I'm to make him consular chaplain."

"But is there such an appointment?" asked Julia, eagerly.

"Heaven knows; but if there is not, there ought to be."

"And the salary, Mr. Bramleigh. Who pays it? What is it?"

"There again I am at fault; but her Majesty could never intend we should live like heathens," said Augustus, "and we shall arrange it somehow."

"Oh, if it were not for 'somehow,'" said Julia, "we poor people would be worse off in life than we are; but there are so many what the watch-makers call escapements in existence, the machinery manages to survive scores of accidents."

"At all events we shall be all together," said Augustus, "and we shall show a stouter front to fortune than if we were to confront her singly."

"I think it a delightful plan," said Julia. "What says Nelly?"

"I think," said Nelly, gravely, "that it is more than kind in you to follow us into our banishment."

"Then, let us set off at once," said Augustus, "for I own to you I wish to be out of men's sight, out of ear-shot of their comments, while this suit is going on. It is the publicity that I dread far more than even the issue. Once that we reach this wild barbarism we are going to, you will see I will bear myself with better spirits and better temper."

"And will you not see M. Pracontal before you go?" asked Julia.

"Not if I can avoid it; unless, indeed, you all think I ought."

Julia looked at Nelly, and then at her brother. She looked as if she wanted them to say something—anything; but neither spoke, and then, with a courage that never failed her, she said, —

"Of course we think that a meeting between two people who have no personal

reasons for dislike, but have a great question to be decided in favor of one of them, cannot but be useful. If it will not lead to a friendship, it may at least disarm a prejudice."

"I wish I had you for my counsel, Julia," said Bramleigh, smiling. "Is it yet too late to send you a brief?"

"Perhaps I am engaged for the other side."

"At all events," said he, more seriously, "if it be a blunder to meet the man, it cannot much matter. The question between us must be decided elsewhere, and we need not add the prejudices of ignorance to the rancour of self-interest. I'll see him."

"That's right; I'm sure that's right," said L'Estrange. "I'll despatch a note to Lady Augusta, who is eager for your answer."

CHAPTER XLVI.

A STROLL AND A GOSSIP.

As well to have a long talk together as to enjoy the glorious beauty and freshness of the Campagna, the two young men set out the next morning for a walk to Rome. It was one of those still cold days of winter, with a deep blue sky above, and an atmosphere clear as crystal as they started.

There was not in the fortunes of either of them much to cheer the spirits or encourage hope, and yet they felt—they knew not why—a sense of buoyancy and light-heartedness they had not known for many a day back.

"How is it, George," asked Augustus, "can you explain it, that when the world went well with me, when I could stroll out into my own woods, and walk for hours over my own broad acres, I never felt so cheery as I do to-day?"

"It was the same spirit made you yesterday declare you enjoyed our humble dinner with a heartier zest than those grand banquets that were daily served up at Castello."

"Just so. But that does not solve the riddle for me. I want to know the why of all this. It is no high sustaining consciousness of doing the right thing; no grand sense of self-approval: for, in the first place, I never had a doubt that we were not the rightful owners of the estate, nor am I now supported by the idea that I am certainly and indubitably on the right road, because nearly all my friends think the very reverse." L'Estrange made no answer. Bramleigh went on: "You yourself are so minded, George. Out with it, man; say at once you think me wrong."

"I have too little faith in my own judgment to go that far."

"Well, will you say that you would have acted differently yourself? Come, I think you can answer that question."

"No, I cannot."

"You can't say whether you would have done as I have, or something quite different?"

"No; there is only one thing I know I should have done—I'd have consulted Julia."

If Bramleigh laughed at this avowal the other joined him, and for a while nothing was said on either side. At last Bramleigh said, "I, too, have a confession to make. I thought that if I were to resist this man's claim by the power of superior wealth I should be acting as dishonourably as though I had fought an unarmed man with a revolver. I told Sedley my scruples, but though he treated them with little deference, there they were, and I could not dismiss them. It was this weakness—Sedley would give it no other name than weakness—of mine that made him incline to settle the matter by a compromise. For a while I yielded to the notion; I'm afraid that I yielded even too far—at least Cutbill opines that one of my letters actually gives a distinct consent, but I don't think so. I know that my meaning was to say to my lawyer, 'This man's claim may push me to publicity and much unpleasantness, without any benefit to him. He may make me a nine-days' wonder in the newspapers and a town-talk, and never reap the least advantage from it. To avoid such exposure I would pay, and pay handsomely; but if you really opined that I was merely stifling a just demand, such a compromise would only bring me lasting misery.' Perhaps I could not exactly define what I meant; perhaps I expressed myself imperfectly and ill; but Sedley always replied to me by something that seemed to refute my reasonings. At the same time Lord Cudluff and Temple treated my scruples with an open contempt. I grew irritable, and possibly less reasonable, and I wrote long letters to Sedley to justify myself and sustain the position I had taken. Of these, indeed of none of my letters, have I copies; and I am told now that they contain admissions which will show that I yielded to the plan of a compromise. Knowing, however, what I felt—what I still feel on the matter—I will not believe this. At all events the world shall see now that I leave the law to take its course. If Pracontal can establish his right, let him take what he owns. I only bargain for one thing, which is, not to be expelled ignominiously from the house in which I was never the rightful owner. It is the act of abdica-

tion, George—the moment of dethronement, that I could not face. It is an avowal of great weakness, I know; but I struggle against it in vain. Every morning when I awoke the same thought met me, am I a mere pretender here? and by some horrible perversity, which I cannot explain, the place, the house, the grounds, the gardens, the shrubberies, the deer-park, grew inexpressibly more dear to me than ever I had felt them. There was not an old ash on the lawn that I did not love; the shady walks through which I had often passed without a thought upon them grew now to have a hold upon and attraction for me that I cannot describe. What shall I be without these dear familiar spots? What will become of me when I shall no longer have these deep glades, these silent woods, to wander in? This became at last so strong upon me that I felt there was but one course to take—I must leave the place at once, and never return to it till I knew that it was my own beyond dispute. I could do that now, while the issue was still undetermined, which would have broken my heart if driven to do on compulsion. Of course this was a matter between me and my own conscience; I had not courage to speak of it to a lawyer, nor did I. Sedley, however, was vexed that I should take any steps without consulting him. He wrote me a letter—almost an angry letter—and he threatened—for it really amounted to a threat, to say that, to a client so decidedly bent on guiding his own case, he certainly felt his services could scarcely be advantageously contributed. I rejoined, perhaps not without irritation; and I am now expecting by each post either his submission to my views, or to hear that he has thrown up the direction of my cause."

"And he was your father's adviser for years!" said L'Estrange, with a tone almost despondent.

"But for which he never would have assumed the tone of dictation he has used towards me. Lord Cudluff, I remember, said, 'The first duty of a man on coming to his property is to change his agent, and his next to get rid of the old servants.' I do not like the theory, George; but from a certain point of view it is not without reason."

"I suspect that neither you nor I want to look at life from that point of view," said L'Estrange with some emotion.

"Not till we can't help it, I'm sure; but these crafty men of the world say that 'we all arrive at their *modus operandi* in the end; that however generously, however trustfully and romantically, we start on the

morning of life, before evening we come to see that in this game we call the world it is only the clever player that escapes ruin."

"I don't—that is, I won't believe that."

"Quite right, George. The theory would tell terribly against fellows like us; for let us do our very best we must be bunglers at the game. What a clever pair of hacks are those yonder! that grey the lady is on has very showy action."

"Look at the liver chestnut the groom is riding,—there's the horse for my money,—so long and so low,—a regular turnspit, and equal to any weight. I declare, that's Lady Augusta, and that's Pracontal with her. See how the Frenchman charges the ox-fences; he'll come to grief if he rides at speed against timber."

The party on horseback passed in a little dip of the ground near them at a smart canter, and soon were out of sight again.

"What a strange intimacy for her, is it not?"

"Julia says, the dash of indiscretion in it was the temptation she couldn't resist, and I suspect she's right. She said to me herself one day, 'I love skating, but I never care for it except the ice is so thin that I hear it giving way on every side as I go.'"

"She gave you her whole character in that one trait. The pleasure that wasn't linked to a peril had no charm for her. She ought, however, to see that the world will regard this intimacy as a breach of decency."

"So she does; she's dying to be attacked about it; at least, so Julia says."

"The man too, if he be an artful fellow, will learn many family details about us, that may disserve us. If it went no further than to know in what spirit we treat his claim,—whether we attach importance to his pretensions or not—these are all things he need not, should not be informed upon."

"Cutbill, who somehow hears everything, told us to-day morning, that Pracontal is 'posted up,'—that was his phrase—as to the temper and nature of every member of your family, and knows to a nicety how to deal with each."

"Then I don't see why we should meet."

"Julia says it is precisely for that very reason; people are always disparaged by these biographical notices, their caprices are assumed to be tastes, and their mere humours are taken for traits of character; and she declares that it will be a good service to the truth that bringing you together. Don't take my version, however, of her reasons, but ask her to give them to you herself."

"Isn't that the wall of the City? I declare we are quite close to Rome already. Now then, first to leave my name for Lady Augusta—not sorry to know I shall not find her at home, for I never understood her, George. I never do understand certain people, whether their levity means that it is the real nature, or simply a humour put on to get rid of you; as though to say, rather than let you impose any solemnity upon me, or talk seriously, I'll have a game at shuttlecock!"

"She always puzzled me," said L'Estrange, "but that wasn't hard to do."

"I suspect, George, that neither you nor I know much about women."

"For my part, I know nothing at all about them."

"And I not much."

After this frank confession on either side, they walked along, each seemingly deep in his own thought, and said little till they reached the City. Leaving them, then, on their way to Lady Augusta's house, where Bramleigh desired to drop his card, we turn for a moment to the little villa at Albano, in front of which a smart groom was leading a lady's horse, while in the distance a solitary rider was slowly walking his horse, and frequently turning his looks towards the gate of the villa.

The explanation of all this was, that Lady Augusta had taken the opportunity of being near the L'Estranges to pay a visit to the Bramleighs, leaving Pracontal to wait for her till she came out.

"This visit is for you, Nelly," said Julia as she read the card; "and I'll make my escape."

She had but time to get out of the room when Lady Augusta entered.

"My dear child," said she, rushing into Nelly's arms, and kissing her with rapturous affection. "My dear child, what a happiness to see you again, and how well you are looking; you're handsomer, I declare, than Marion. Yes, darling,—don't blush; it's perfectly true. Where's Augustus? has he come with you?"

"He has gone in to Rome to see you," said Nelly, whose face was still crimson, and who felt flurried and agitated by the flighty impetuosity of the other.

"I hope it was to say that you are both coming to me? Yes, dearest, I'll take no excuse. It would be a town-talk if you stopped anywhere else; and I have such a nice little villa—a mere baby-house; but quite large enough to hold you; and my brother-in-law will take Augustus about, and show him Rome, and I shall have you

all to myself. We have much to talk of, haven't we?"

Nelly murmured an assent, and the other continued.

"It's all so sudden, and so dreadful,—one doesn't realize it; at least I don't. And it usually takes me an hour or two of a morning to convince me that we are all ruined; and then I set to work thinking how I'm to live on—I forget exactly what—how much is it, darling? Shall I be able to keep my dear horses? I'd rather die than part with Ben Azir: one of the Sultan's own breeding; an Arab of blue blood, Nelly,—think of that! I've refused fabulous sums for him; but he is such a love, and follows me everywhere, and rears up when I scold him,—and all to be swept away as if it was a dream. What do you mean to do, dearest? Marry, of course. I know that,—but in the meanwhile?"

"We are going to Cattaro. Augustus has been named consul there."

"Darling child, you don't know what you are saying. Isn't a consul a horrid creature that lives in a seaport, and worries merchant seamen, and imprisons people who have no passports?"

"I declare I haven't a notion of his duties," said Nelly, laughing.

"Oh, I know them perfectly. Papa always wrote to the consul about getting heavy baggage through the custom-house; and when our servants quarrelled with the porters, or the hotel people, it was the consul sent some of them to jail; but you are aware, darling, he isn't a creature one knows. They are simply impossible, dear, impossible." And as she spoke she lay back in her chair, and fanned herself as though actually overcome by the violence of her emotion.

"I must hope Augustus will not be impossible;" and Nelly said this with a dry mixture of humour and vexation.

"He can't help it, dearest. It will be from no fault of his own. Let a man be what he may, once he derogates there's an end of him. It sounds beautifully, I know, to say that he will remain gentleman and man of station through all the accidents of life; so he might, darling, so long as he did nothing—absolutely nothing. The moment, however, he touches an "emploi" it's all over; from that hour he becomes the custom's creature, or the consul, or the factor, or whatever it be irrevocably. Do you know that is the only way to keep men of family out of small official life? We should see them keeping lighthouses if it were not for the obloquy."

"And it would be still better than dependence."

"Yes, dearest, in a novel—in a three-volume thing from Mudie—so it would; but real life is not half so accommodating. I'll talk to Gusty about this myself. And now, do tell me about yourself. Is there no engagement? no fatal attachment that all this change of fortune has blighted? Who is he, dearest? tell me all! You don't know what a wonderful creature I am for expedients. There never was the like of me for resources. I could always pull any one through a difficulty but myself."

"I am sorry I have no web to offer you for disentanglement."

"So then he has behaved well; he has not deserted you in your change of fortune?"

"There is really no one in the case," said Nelly, laughing. "No one to be either faithful or unworthy."

"Worse again, dearest. There is nothing so good at your age as an unhappy attachment. A girl without a grievance always mopes; and," added she, with a marked acuteness of look, "moping ages one quicker than downright grief. The eyes get a heavy expression, and the mouth drags at the corners, and the chin—isn't it funny, now, such a stolid feature as the chin should take on to worry us?—but the chin widens and becomes square, like those Egyptian horrors in the Museum."

"I must look to that," said Nelly, gravely. "I'd be shocked to find my chin betraying me."

"And men are such wretches. There is no amount of fretting they don't exact from us; but if we show any signs of it afterwards,—any hard lines about the eyes, or any patchiness of colour in the cheek,—they cry out, 'Isn't she gone off?' That's their phrase, 'Isn't she gone off?'"

"How well you understand; how well you read them?"

"I should think I do; but after all, dearest, they have very few devices; if it wasn't that they can get away, run off to the clubs and their other haunts, they would have no chance with us. See how they fare in country-houses, for instance. How many escape there! What a nice stuff your dress is made of!"

"It was very cheap."

"No matter; it's English. That's the great thing here. Any one can buy a 'gros.' What one really wants is a nameless texture and a neutral tint. You must positively walk with me on the Pincian in that dress. Roman men remark everything. You'll not be ten minutes on the promenade

till every one will know whether you wear two buttons on your gloves or three."

"How odious!"

"How delightful! Why, my dear child, for whom do we dress? Not for each other; no more than the artists of a theatre act or sing for the rest of the company. Our audience is before us; not always a very enlightened or cultivated one, but always critical. There, do look at that stupid groom; see how he suffers my horse to lag behind: the certain way to have him kicked by the other; and I should die, I mean really die, if anything happened to Ben Azir. By the way how well our parson rides. I declare I like him better in the saddle than in the pulpit. They rave here about the way he jumps the ox-fences. You must say 'tant des choses' for me, to him and his sister, whom I fear I have treated shamefully. I was to have had her to dinner one day, and I forgot all about it; but she didn't mind, and wrote me the prettiest note in the world. But I always say, it is so easy for people of small means to be good-tempered. They have no jealousies about going here or there; no heart-burnings that such a one's lace is Brussels point, and much finer than their own. Don't you agree with me? There, I knew it would come to that. He's got the snaffle out of Ben Azir's mouth, and he's sure to break away."

"That gentleman apparently has come to the rescue. See, he has dismounted to set all to rights."

"How polite of him. Do you know him, dear?"

"No. I may have seen him before. I'm so terribly short-sighted, and this glass does not suit me; but I must be going. I suppose I had better thank that strange man, hadn't I? Oh, of course, dearest, you would be too bashful; but I'm not. My old governess, Madame de Forgeon, used to say that English people never knew how to be bashful; they only looked culpable. And I protest she was right."

"The gentleman is evidently waiting for your gratitude; he is standing there still."

"What an observant puss it is," said Lady Augusta, kissing her. "Tell Gusty to come and see me. Settle some day to come in and dine, and bring the parson: he's a great favourite of mine. Where have I dropped my gauntlet? Oh, here it is. Pretty whip, isn't it? A present, a sort of a love-gift from an old Russian prince, who wanted me to marry him; and I said I was afraid; that I heard Russians knouted their wives. And so he assured me I should have the only whip he ever

used, and sent me this. It was neat, or rather, as Dumas says, 'La plaisanterie n'était pas mal pour un Cosaque.' Good-by, dearest, good-by."

So actually exhausted was poor Nelly by the rattling impetuosity of Lady Augusta's manner, her sudden transitions, and abrupt questionings, that, when Julia entered the room, and saw her lying back in a chair, wearied-looking and pale, she asked —

"Are you ill, dear?"

"No; but I am actually tired. Lady Augusta has been an hour here, and she has talked till my head turned."

"I feel for you sincerely. She gave me one of the worst headaches I ever had, and then made my illness a reason for staying all the evening here to bathe my temples."

"That was good-natured, however."

"So I'd have thought, too, but that she made George always attend her with the ice and the eau-de-cologne, and thus maintained a little ambulant flirtation with him, that, sick as I was, almost drove me mad."

"She means nothing, I am certain, by all these levities, or, rather, she does not care what they mean; but here come our brothers, and I am eager for news if they have any."

"Where's George?" asked Julia, as Augustus entered alone.

"Sir Marcus Something caught him at the gate, and asked to have five minutes with him."

"That means putting off dinner for an hour at least," said she, half pettishly. "I must go and warn the cook."

CHAPTER XLVII.

A PROPOSAL IN FORM.

WHEN Sir Marcus Cluff was introduced into L'Estrange's study, his first care was to divest himself of his various "wraps," a process not very unlike that of the *Hamlet* gravedigger. At length, he arrived at a suit of entire chamois-leather, in which he stood forth like an enormous frog, and sorely pushed the parson's gravity in consequence.

"This is what Hazeldean calls the 'chest-sufferer's true cuticle.' Nothing like leather, my dear sir, in pulmonary affections. If I'd have known it earlier in life, I'd have saved half of my left lung, which is now hopelessly hepatized."

L'Estrange looked compassionate, though not very well knowing what it was he had pity for.

"Not," added the invalid hastily, "that even this constitutes a grave constitutional defect. Davies says in his second volume

that among the robust men of England you would not find one in twenty without some lungular derangement. He percussed me all over, and was some time before he found out the blot." The air of triumph in which this was said showed L'Estrange that he too might afford to look joyful.

"So that, with this reservation, sir, I do consider I have a right to regard myself, as Borcas pronounced me, sound as a roach."

"I sincerely hope so."

"You see, sir, I mean to be frank with you. I descend to no concealments."

It was not very easy for L'Estrange to understand this speech, or divine what especial necessity there was for his own satisfaction as to the condition of Sir Marcus Cluff's viscera; he, however, assented in general terms to the high esteem he felt for candour and openness.

"No, my dear L'Estrange," resumed he, "without this firm conviction — a sentiment based on faith and the stethoscope together — you had not seen me here this day."

"The weather is certainly trying," said L'Estrange.

"I do not allude to the weather, sir; the weather is, for the season, remarkably fine weather; there was a mean temperature of 68° Fahrenheit during the last twenty-four hours. I spoke of my pulmonary condition, because I am aware people are in the habit of calling me consumptive. It is the indiscriminating way ignorance treats a very complex question; and when I assured you that without an honest conviction that organic mischief had not proceeded far, I really meant what I said when I told you you would not have seen me here this day."

Again was the parson mystified, but he only bowed.

"Ah, sir," sighed the other, "why will not people be always candid and sincere? And when shall we arrive at the practice of what will compel — actually compel sincerity? I tell you, for instance, I have an estate worth so much — horse property here, and shares in this or that company — but there are mortgages, I don't say how much, against me; I have no need to say it. You drive down to the Registration Office and you learn to a shilling to what extent I am liable. Why not have the same system for physical condition, sir? Why can't you call on the College of Physicians, or whatever the body be, and say, 'How is Sir Marcus Cluff? I'd like to know about that right auricle of his heart. What about his pancreas?' Don't you perceive the inestimable advantage of what I advise?"

"I protest, sir, I scarcely follow you. I

do not exactly see how I have the right, or to what extent I am interested, to make this inquiry."

"You amaze — you actually amaze me!" and Sir Marcus sat for some seconds contemplating the object of his astonishment. "I come here, sir, to make an offer for your sister's hand —"

"Pardon my interrupting, but I learn this intention only now."

"Then you didn't read my note. You didn't read the 'turn over.'"

"I'm afraid not. I only saw what referred to the church."

"Then, sir, you missed the most important; had you taken the trouble to turn the page, you would have seen that I ask your permission to pay my formal attentions to Miss L'Estrange. It was with intention I first discussed and dismissed a matter of business; I then proceeded to a question of sentiment, premising that I held myself bound to satisfy you regarding my property, and my pulmonary condition. Mind, body, and estate, sir, are not coupled together ignorantly, nor inharmoniously; as you know far better than me,—mind, body, and estate," repeated he, slowly. "I am here to satisfy you on each of them."

"Don't you think, Sir Marcus, that there are questions which should possibly precede these?"

"Do you mean Miss L'Estrange's sentiments, sir?" George bowed, and Sir Marcus continued: "I am vain enough to suppose I can make out a good case for myself. I look more, but I'm only forty-eight, forty-eight on the twelfth September. I have twenty-seven thousand pounds in bank stock—stock, mind you,—and three thousand four hundred a year in land, Norfolk property. I have a share—we'll not speak of it now—in a city house; and what's better than all, sir, not sixpence of debt in the world. I am aware your sister can have no fortune, but I can afford myself, what the French call a caprice, though this ain't a caprice, for I have thought well over the matter, and I see she would suit me perfectly. She has nice gentle ways, she can be soothing without depression, and calm without discouragement. Ah, that is the secret of secrets! She gave me my drops last evening with a tenderness, a graceful sympathy, that went to my heart. I want that, sir—I need it, I yearn for it. Simpson said to me years ago, 'Marry, Sir Marcus, marry! yours is a temperament that requires study and intelligent care. A really clever woman gets to know a pulse to perfection; they have a finer sensibility, a higher organization, too, in the touch.'

Simpson laid great stress on that; but I have looked out in vain, sir. I employed agents; I sent people abroad; I advertised in *The Times*—M. C. was in the second column—for above two years; and with a correspondence that took two clerks to read through and minute. All to no end! All in vain! They tell me the really competent people never do reply to an advertisement; that one must look out for them oneself, make private personal inquiry. Well, sir, I did that, and I got into some unpleasant scrapes with it, and two actions for breach of promise: two thousand pounds the last one cost me, though I got my verdict, sir; the Chief Baron very needlessly recommending me, for the future, to be cautious in forming the acquaintance of ladies, and to avoid widows as a general rule. These are the pleasantries of the Bench, and doubtless they amuse the junior bar. I declare to you, sir, in all seriousness, I'd rather that a man should give me a flip on the nose than take the liberty of a joke with me. It is the one insufferable thing in life." This sally had so far excited him that it was some minutes ere he recovered his self-possession. "Now, Mr. L'Estrange," said he, at last, "I bind you in no degree—I pledge you to nothing; I simply ask leave to address myself to your sister. It is what lawyers call a 'motion to show cause why.'"

"I perceive that," broke in L'Estrange; "but even that much I ought not to concede without consulting my sister and obtaining her consent. You will allow me therefore time."

"Time, sir! My nerves must not be agitated. There can be no delays. It was not without a great demand on my courage, and a strong dose of chlorodine—Japp's preparation—that I made this effort now. Don't imagine I can sustain it much longer. No, sir, I cannot give time."

"After all, Sir Marcus, you can scarcely suppose that my sister is prepared for such a proposition."

"Sir, they are always prepared for it. It never takes them unawares. I have made them my study for years, and I do think I have some knowledge of their way of thinking and acting. I'll lay my life on it, if you will go and say, 'Maria'—"

"My sister's name is Julia," said the other, dryly.

"It may be, sir—I said 'Maria' generically, and I repeat it—'Maria, there is in my study at this moment a gentleman, of irreproachable morals and unblemished constitution, whose fortune is sufficiently ample to secure many comforts and all absolute necessities, who desires to make you his wife;'

her first exclamation will be, 'It is Sir Marcus Cluff.'

"It is not impossible," said L'Estrange, gravely.

"The rest, sir, is not with you, nor even with me. Do me, then, the great favour to bear my message."

Although seeing the absurdity of the situation, and vaguely forecasting the way Julia might possibly hear the proposition, L'Estrange was always so much disposed to yield to the earnestness of any one who persisted in a demand, that he bowed and left the room.

"Well, George, he has proposed?" cried Julia, as her brother entered the room, where she sat with Nelly Bramleigh.

He nodded only, and the two girls burst out into a merry laugh.

"Come, come, Julia," said he, reprovingly. "Absurd as it may seem, the man is in earnest, and must be treated with consideration."

"But tell us the whole scene. Let us have it all as it occurred."

"I'll do nothing of the kind. It's quite enough to say that he declares he has a good fortune, and wishes to share it with you, and I think the expression of that wish should secure him a certain deference and respect."

"But who refuses, who thinks of refusing him all the deference and respect he could ask for? Not I, certainly. Come now, like a dear good boy, let us hear all he said, and what you replied. I suspect there never was a better bit of real-life comedy. I only wish I could have had a part in it."

"Not too late yet, perhaps," said Nelly, with a dry humour. "The fifth act is only beginning."

"That is precisely what I am meditating. George will not tell me accurately what took place in his interview, and I think I could

not do better than go and learn Sir Marcus' sentiments for myself."

She arose and appeared about to leave the room when L'Estrange sprang towards the door, and stood with his back against it.

"You're not serious, Ju?" cried he, in amazement.

"I should say very serious. If Sir Marcus only makes out his case, as favourably as you, with all your bungling, can't help representing it, why—all things considered, eh, Nelly? *you*, I know, agree with me—I rather suspect the proposition might be entertained."

"Oh, this is too monstrous. It is beyond all belief," cried L'Estrange. And he rushed from the room in a torrent of passion, while Julia sank back in a chair, and laughed till her eyes ran over with tears of merriment.

"How could you, Julia! Oh, how could you!" said Nelly, as she leaned over her and tried to look reproachful.

"If you mean, how could I help quizzing him? I can understand you; but I could not. No, Nelly, I could not. It is my habit to seize on the absurd side of any embarrassment; and you may be sure there is always one if you only look for it; and you've no idea how much pleasanter—ay, and easier too—it is to laugh oneself out of difficulties than to grieve over them. You'll see George, now, will be spirited up, out of pure fright, to do what he ought: to tell this man that his proposal is an absurdity, and that young women, even as destitute of fortune as myself, do not marry as nursetenders. There! I declare that is Sir Marcus driving away already. Only think with what equanimity I can see wealth and title taking leave of me. Never say after that that I have not courage."

DISCOVERIES OF ROCK-SALT NEAR BERLIN.—A few weeks ago, as the workmen were boring for an artesian well at a place called Spereberg, near the Berlin and Gorkitz Railway, in Prussia, they unexpectedly struck a bed of rock-salt at rather more than 300 feet below the surface. The samples brought up are quite white and clean, and a chemical analysis has demonstrated their great purity, being perfectly free from any admixture of natron, kali, or magnesia. At Stassfurt, another place in Prussia, where rock-salt was discovered last year, a stratum of kali-soda overlies the bed of salt, whilst at Schonebeck, also in Prussia, it lies under the salt. It is therefore considered by no means improbable, according to the *Grocer*, that these mineral salts, which are now so much used in agriculture and various industrial manufactures, may

still be found at Spereberg at a greater depth than has hitherto been reached; this will soon be decided, as the boring operations are being carried on with spirit and energy. Down to last week the workmen had penetrated the bed of rock-salt to the depth of 85 feet without any indications of arriving at its lowest stratum. Under all circumstances, the owner of the ground may be thankful for his fortunate discovery; for, being situated close to a railway, he can supply the inhabitants of Berlin with salt at a very cheap rate, and it is only within the last few months that the sale of this article, which has hitherto always been a Government monopoly in Prussia, has been thrown open to public competition, subject only to a very moderate tax on the production.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PHINEAS DISCUSSED.

LADY LAURA Kennedy heard two accounts of her friend's speech, — and both from men who had been present. Her husband was in his place, in accordance with his constant practice, and Lord Brentford had been seated, perhaps unfortunately, in the peers' gallery.

"And you think it was a failure?" Lady Laura said to her husband.

"It certainly was not a success. There was nothing particular about it. There was a good deal of it you could hardly hear."

After that she got the morning newspaper, and turned with great interest to the report. Phineas Finn had been, as it were, adopted by her as her own political offspring, — or at any rate as her political godchild. She had made promises on his behalf to various personages of high political standing, — to her father, to Mr. Monk, to the Duke of St. Bungay, and even to Mr. Mildmay himself. She had thoroughly intended that Phineas Finn should be a political success from the first; and, since her marriage, she had, I think, been more intent upon it than before. Perhaps there was a feeling on her part that having wronged him in one way, she would repay him in another. She had become so eager for his success, — for a while scorning to conceal her feeling, — that her husband had unconsciously begun to entertain a dislike to her eagerness. We know how quickly women arrive at an understanding of the feelings of those with whom they live; and now, on that very occasion, Lady Laura perceived that her husband did not take in good part her anxiety on behalf of her friend. She saw that it was so as she turned over the newspaper looking for the report of the speech. It was given in six lines, and at the end of it there was an intimation, — expressed in the shape of advice, — that the young orator had better speak more slowly if he wished to be efficacious either with the House or with the country.

"He seems to have been cheered a good deal," said Lady Laura.

"All members are cheered at their first speech," said Mr. Kennedy.

"I've no doubt he'll do well yet," said Lady Laura.

"Very likely," said Mr. Kennedy. Then he turned to his newspaper, and did not take his eyes off it as long as his wife remained with him.

Later in the day Lady Laura saw her father, and Miss Effingham was with her at the time. Lord Brentford said something

which indicated that he had heard the debate on the previous evening, and Lady Laura instantly began to ask him about Phineas.

"The less said the better," was the Earl's reply.

"Do you mean that it was so bad as that?" asked Lady Laura.

"It was not very bad at first; — though indeed nobody could say it was very good. But he got himself into a mess about the police and the magistrates before he had done, and nothing but the kindly feeling always shown to a first effort saved him from being coughed down." Lady Laura had not a word more to say about Phineas to her father; but, womanlike, she resolved that she would not abandon him. How many first failures in the world have been the precursors of ultimate success? "Mildmay will lose his bill," said the Earl, sorrowfully. "There does not seem to be a doubt about that."

"And what will you all do?" asked Lady Laura.

"We must go to the country, I suppose," said the Earl.

"What's the use? You can't have a more liberal House than you have now," said Lady Laura.

"We may have one less liberal, — or rather less radical, — with fewer men to support Mr. Turnbull. I do not see what else we can do. They say that there are no less than twenty-seven men on our side of the House who will either vote with Turnbull against us, or will decline to vote at all."

"Every one of them ought to lose his seat," said Lady Laura.

"But what can we do? How is the Queen's Government to be carried on?" We all know the sad earnestness which impressed itself on the Earl's brow as he asked these momentous questions. "I don't suppose that Mr. Turnbull can form a Ministry."

"With Mr. Daubeny as whipper-in, perhaps he might," said Lady Laura.

"And will Mr. Finn lose his seat?" asked Violet Effingham.

"Most probably," said the Earl. "He only got it by an accident."

"You must find him a seat somewhere in England," said Violet.

"That might be difficult," said the Earl, who then left the room.

The two women remained together for some quarter of an hour before they spoke again. Then Lady Laura said something about her brother. "If there be a dissolution, I hope Oswald will stand for Loughton." Loughton was a borough close to

Saulsby, in which, as regarded its political interests, Lord Brentford was supposed to have considerable influence. To this Violet said nothing. "It is quite time," continued Lady Laura, "that old Mr. Standish should give way. He has had the seat for twenty-five years, and has never done anything, and he seldom goes to the House now."

"He is not your uncle, is he?"

"No; he is papa's cousin; but he is ever so much older than papa; — nearly eighty, I believe."

"Would not that be just the place for Mr. Finn?" said Violet.

Then Lady Laura became very serious. "Oswald would of course have a better right to it than anybody else."

"But would Lord Chiltern go into Parliament? I have heard him declare that he would not."

"If we could get papa to ask him, I think he would change his mind," said Lady Laura.

There was again silence for a few moments, after which Violet returned to the original subject of their conversation. "It would be a thousand pities that Mr. Finn should be turned out into the cold. Don't you think so?"

"I, for one, should be very sorry."

"So should I, — and the more so from what Lord Brentford says about his not speaking well last night. I don't think that it is very much of an accomplishment for a gentleman to speak well. Mr. Turnbull, I suppose, speaks well; and they say that that horrid man, Mr. Bonteen, can talk by the hour together. I don't think that it shows a man to be clever at all. But I believe Mr. Finn would do it, if he set his mind to it, and I shall think it a great shame if they turn him out."

"It would depend very much, I suppose, on Lord Tulla."

"I don't know anything about Lord Tulla," said Violet; "but I'm quite sure that he might have Loughton, if he manage it properly. Of course Lord Chiltern should have it if he wants it, but I don't think he will stand in Mr. Finn's way."

"I'm afraid it's out of the question," said Lady Laura, gravely. "Papa thinks so much about the borough." The reader will remember that both Lord Brentford and his daughter were thorough reformers! The use of a little borough of his own, however, is a convenience to a great peer.

"Those difficult things have always to be talked of for a long while, and then they become easy," said Violet. "I believe if you were to propose to Mr. Kennedy to give all his property to the Church Mis-

sionaries and emigrate to New Zealand, he'd begin to consider it seriously after a time."

"I shall not try, at any rate."

"Because you don't want to go to New Zealand; — but you might try about Loughton for poor Mr. Finn."

"Violet," said Lady Laura, after a moment's pause; — and she spoke sharply; "Violet, I believe you are in love with Mr. Finn."

"That's just like you, Laura."

"I never made such an accusation against you before, or against anybody else that I can remember. But I do begin to believe that you are in love with Mr. Finn."

"Why shouldn't I be in love with him, if I like?"

"I say nothing about that; — only he has not got a penny."

"But I have, my dear."

"And I doubt whether you have any reason for supposing that he is in love with you."

"That would be my affair, my dear."

"Then you are in love with him?"

"That is my affair also."

Lady Laura shrugged her shoulders. "Of course it is; and if you tell me to hold my tongue, of course I will do so. If you ask me whether I think it a good match, of course I must say I do not."

"I don't tell you to hold your tongue, and I don't ask you what you think about the match. You are quite welcome to talk as much about me as you please; — but as to Mr. Phineas Finn, you have no business to think anything."

"I shouldn't talk to anybody but yourself."

"I am growing to be quite indifferent as to what people say. Lady Baldock asked me the other day whether I was going to throw myself away on Mr. Laurence Fitzgibbon."

"No!"

"Indeed she did."

"And what did you answer?"

"I told her that it was not quite settled; but that as I had only spoken to him once during the last two years, and then for not more than half a minute, and as I wasn't sure whether I knew him by sight, and as I had reason to suppose he didn't know my name, there might, perhaps, be a delay of a week or two before the thing came off. Then she flounced out of the room."

"But what made her ask about Mr. Fitzgibbon?"

"Somebody had been hoaxing her. I am beginning to think that Augusta does it for her private amusement. If so, I shall think more highly of my dear cousin than I have

hitherto done. But, Laura, as you have made a similar accusation against me, and as I cannot get out of it with you as I do with my aunt, I must ask you to hear my protestation. I am not in love with Mr. Phineas Finn. Heaven help me;—as far as I can tell I am not in love with any one, and never shall be." Lady Laura looked pleased. "Do you know," continued Violet, "that I think I could be in love with Mr. Phineas Finn, if I could be in love with anybody." Then Lady Laura looked displeased. "In the first place, he is a gentleman," continued Violet. "Then he is a man of spirit. And then he has not too much spirit;—not that kind of spirit which makes some men think that they are the finest things going. His manners are perfect;—not Chesterfieldian, and yet never offensive. He never browbeats any one, and never toadies any one. He knows how to live easily with men of all ranks, without any appearance of claiming a special status for himself. If he were made Archbishop of Canterbury to-morrow, I believe he would settle down into the place of the first subject in the land without arrogance, and without false shame."

"You are his eulogist with a vengeance."

"I am his eulogist; but I am not in love with him. If he were to ask me to be his wife to-morrow, I should be distressed, and should refuse him. If he were to marry my dearest friend in the world, I should tell him to kiss me and be my brother. As to Mr. Phineas Finn,—those are my sentiments."

"What you say is very odd."

"Why odd?"

"Simply because mine are the same."

"Are they the same? I once thought, Laura, that you did love him;—that you meant to be his wife."

Lady Laura sat for a while without making any reply to this. She sat with her elbow on the table and with her face leaning on her hand,—thinking how far it would tend to her comfort if she spoke in true confidence. Violet during the time never took her eyes from her friend's face, but remained silent as though waiting for an answer. She had been very explicit as to her feelings. Would Laura Kennedy be equally explicit? She was too clever to forget that such plainness of speech would be, must be more difficult to Lady Laura than to herself. Lady Laura was a married woman; but she felt that her friend would have been wrong to search for secrets, unless she were ready to tell her own. It was probably some such feeling which made Lady Laura speak at last.

"So I did, nearly—" said Lady Laura; "very nearly. You told me just now that you had money, and could therefore do as you pleased. I had no money, and could not do as I pleased."

"And you told me also that I had no reason for thinking that he cared for me."

"Did I? Well;—I suppose you have no reason. He did care for me. He did love me."

"He told you so?"

"Yes,—he told me so."

"And how did you answer him?"

"I had that very morning become engaged to Mr. Kennedy. That was my answer."

"And what did he say when you told him?"

"I do not know. I cannot remember. But he behaved very well."

"And now,—if he were to love me, you would grudge me his love?"

"Not for that reason,—not if I know myself. Oh no! I would not be so selfish as that."

"For what reason then?"

"Because I look upon it as written in heaven that you are to be Oswald's wife."

"Heaven's writings then are false," said Violet, getting up and walking away.

In the meantime Phineas was very wretched at home. When he reached his lodgings after leaving the House,—after his short conversation with Mr. Monk,—he tried to comfort himself with what that gentleman had said to him. For a while, while he was walking, there had been some comfort in Mr. Monk's words. Mr. Monk had much experience, and doubtless knew what he was saying,—and there might yet be hope. But all this hope faded away when Phineas was in his own rooms. There came upon him, as he looked round them, an idea that he had no business to be in Parliament, that he was an impostor, that he was going about the world under false pretences, and that he would never set himself aright, even unto himself, till he had gone through some terrible act of humiliation. He had been a cheat even to Mr. Quintus Slide of the Banner, in accepting an invitation to come among them. He had been a cheat to Lady Laura, in that he had induced her to think that he was fit to live with her. He was a cheat to Violet Effingham, in assuming that he was capable of making himself agreeable to her. He was a cheat to Lord Chiltern when riding his horses, and pretending to be a proper associate for a man of fortune. Why,—what was his income? What his birth? What his proper position? And now he

had got the reward which all cheats deserve. Then he went to bed, and as he lay there, he thought of Mary Flood Jones. Had he plighted his troth to Mary, and then have worked like a slave under Mr. Low's auspices, — he would not have been a cheat.

It seemed to him that he had hardly been asleep when the girl came into his room in the morning. "Sir," said she, "there's that gentleman there."

"What gentleman?"

"The old gentleman."

Then Phineas knew that Mr. Clarkson was in his sitting-room, and that he would not leave it till he had seen the owner of the room. Nay, — Phineas was pretty sure that Mr. Clarkson would come into the bedroom, if he were kept long waiting. "Damn the old gentleman," said Phineas in his wrath; — and the maid-servant heard him say so.

In about twenty minutes he went out into the sitting-room, with his slippers on and in his dressing-gown. Suffering under the circumstances of such an emergency, how is any man to go through the work of dressing and washing with proper exactness? As to the prayers which he said on that morning, I think that no question should be asked. He came out with a black cloud on his brow, and with his mind half made up to kick Mr. Clarkson out of the room. Mr. Clarkson, when he saw him, moved his chin round within his white cravat, as was a custom with him, and put his thumb and forefinger on his lips, and then shook his head.

"Very bad, Mr. Finn; very bad indeed; very bad, ain't it?"

"You coming here in this way at all times in the day is very bad," said Phineas.

"And where would you have me go? Would you like to see me down in the lobby of the House?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Clarkson, I don't want to see you anywhere."

"Ah; yes; I daresay! And that's what you call honest, being a Parliament gent! You had my money, and then you tell me you don't want to see me any more!"

"I have not had your money," said Phineas.

"But let me tell you," continued Mr. Clarkson, "that I want to see you; — and shall go on seeing you till the money is paid."

"I've not had any of your money," said Phineas.

Mr. Clarkson again twitched his chin about on the top of his cravat and smiled. "Mr. Finn," said he, showing the bill, "is that your name?"

"Yes, it is."

"Then I want my money."

"I have no money to give you."

"Do be punctual, now. Why ain't you punctual? I'd do anything for you if you were punctual. I would indeed." Mr. Clarkson, as he said this, sat down in the chair which had been placed for our hero's breakfast, and cutting a slice off the loaf, began to butter it with great composure.

"Mr. Clarkson," said Phineas, "I cannot ask you to breakfast here. I am engaged."

"I'll just take a bit of bread and butter all the same," said Clarkson. "Where do you get your butter? Now I could tell you a woman who'd give it you cheaper and a deal better than this. This is all lard. Shall I send her to you?"

"No," said Phineas. There was no tea ready, and therefore Mr. Clarkson emptied the milk into a cup and drank it. "After this," said Phineas, "I must beg, Mr. Clarkson, that you will never come to my room any more. I shall not be at home to you."

"The lobby of the House is the same thing to me," said Mr. Clarkson. "They know me there well. I wish you'd be punctual, and then we'd be the best of friends." After that Mr. Clarkson, having finished his bread and butter, took his leave.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SECOND READING IS CARRIED.

THE debate on the bill was prolonged during the whole of that week. Lord Brentford, who loved his seat in the Cabinet and the glory of being a Minister, better even than he loved his borough, had taken a gloomy estimate when he spoke of twenty-seven defaulters, and of the bill as certainly lost. Men who were better able than he to make estimates, — the Bonteens and Fitzgibbons on each side of the House, and above all, the Ratlers and Robys, produced lists from day to day which varied now by three names in one direction, then by two in another, and which fluctuated at last by units only. They all concurred in declaring that it would be a very near division. A great effort was made to close the debate on the Friday, but it failed, and the full tide of speech was carried on till the following Monday. On that morning Phineas heard Mr. Ratler declare at the club that, as far as his judgment went, the division at that moment was a fair subject for a bet. "There are two men doubtful in the House," said Mr. Ratler, "and if one votes on one side and one on the other, or if

neither vote at all, it will be a tie." Mr. Roby, however, the whip on the other side, was quite sure that one at least of these gentlemen would go into his lobby, and that the other would not go into Mr. Ratler's lobby. I am inclined to think that the town was generally inclined to put more confidence in the accuracy of Mr. Roby than in that of Mr. Ratler; and among betting men there certainly was a point given by those who backed the Conservatives. The odds, however, were lost, for on the division the numbers in the two lobbies were equal, and the Speaker gave his casting vote in favour of the Government. The bill was read a second time, and was lost, as a matter of course, in reference to any subsequent action. Mr. Roby declared that even Mr. Mildmay could not go on with nothing but the Speaker's vote to support him. Mr. Mildmay had no doubt felt that he could not go on with his bill from the moment in which Mr. Turnbull had declared his opposition; but he could not with propriety withdraw it in deference to Mr. Turnbull's opinion.

During the week Phineas had had his hands sufficiently full. Twice he had gone to the potted peas inquiry; but he had been at the office of the People's Banner more often than that. Bunce had been very resolute in his determination to bring an action against the police for false imprisonment, even though he spent every shilling of his savings in doing so. And when his wife, in the presence of Phineas, begged that by-gones might be by-gones, reminding him that spilt milk could not be recovered, he called her a mean-spirited woman. Then Mrs. Bunce wept a flood of tears, and told her favourite lodger that for her all comfort in this world was over. "Drat the reformers, I say. And I wish there was no Parliament; so I do. What's the use of all the voting, when it means nothing but dry bread and cross words?" Phineas by no means encouraged his landlord in his litigious spirit, advising him rather to keep his money in his pocket, and leave the fighting of the battle to the columns of the Banner, — which would fight it, at any rate, with economy. But Bunce, though he delighted in the Banner, and showed an unfortunate readiness to sit at the feet of Mr. Quintus Slide, would have his action at law; — in which resolution Mr. Slide did, I fear, encourage him behind the back of his better friend, Phineas Finn.

Phineas went with Bunce to Mr. Low's chambers, — for Mr. Low had in some way become acquainted with the law-stationer's journeyman, — and there some very good

advice was given. "Have you asked yourself what is your object, Mr. Bunce?" said Mr. Low. Mr. Bunce declared that he had asked himself that question, and had answered it. His object was redress. "In the shape of compensation to yourself," suggested Mr. Low. No; Mr. Bunce would not admit that he personally required any compensation. The redress wanted was punishment to the man. "Is it for vengeance?" asked Mr. Low. No; it was not for vengeance, Mr. Bunce declared. "It ought not to be," continued Mr. Low; "because, though you think that the man exceeded in his duty, you must feel that he was doing so through no personal ill-will to yourself."

"What I want is, to have the fellows kept in their proper places," said Mr. Bunce.

"Exactly; — and therefore these things, when they occur, are mentioned in the press and in Parliament, — and the attention of a Secretary of State is called to them. Thank God, we don't have very much of that kind of thing in England."

"Maybe we shall have more if we don't look to it," said Bunce stoutly.

"We always are looking to it," said Mr. Low; — "looking to it very carefully. But I don't think anything is to be done in that way by indictment against a single man, whose conduct has been already approved by the magistrates. If you want notoriety, Mr. Bunce, and don't mind what you pay for it; or have got anybody else to pay for it; then indeed —"

"There ain't nobody to pay for it," said Bunce, waxing angry.

"Then I certainly should not pay for it myself if I were you," said Mr. Low.

But Bunce was not to be counselled out of his intention. When he was out in the square with Phineas he expressed great anger against Mr. Low. "He don't know what patriotism means," said the law scrivener. "And then he talks to me about notoriety! It has always been the same way with 'em. If a man shows a spark of public feeling, it's all habmition. I don't want no notoriety. I wants to earn my bread peaceable, and to be let alone when I'm about my own business. I pays rates for the police to look after rogues, not to haul folks about and lock 'em up for days and nights, who is a doing what they has a legal right to do." After that, Bunce went to his attorney, to the great detriment of the business at the stationer's shop, and Phineas visited the office of the People's Banner. There he wrote a leading article about Bunce's case, for which he was in due

time to be paid a guinea. After all, the People's Banner might do more for him in this way than ever would be done by Parliament. Mr. Slide, however, and another gentleman at the Banner office, much older than Mr. Slide, who announced himself as the actual editor, were anxious that Phineas should rid himself of his heterodox political resolutions about the ballot. It was not that they cared much about his own opinions; and when Phineas attempted to argue with the editor on the merits of the ballot, the editor put him down very shortly. "We go in for it, Mr. Finn," he said. If Mr. Finn would go in for it too, the editor seemed to think that Mr. Finn might make himself very useful at the Banner office. Phineas stoutly maintained that this was impossible, — and was therefore driven to confine his articles in the service of the people to those open subjects on which his opinions agreed with those of the People's Banner. This was his second article, and the editor seemed to think that, backward as he was about the ballot, he was too useful an aid to be thrown aside. A member of Parliament is not now all that he was once, but still there is a prestige in the letters affixed to his name which makes him loom larger in the eyes of the world than other men. Get into Parliament, if it be but for the borough of Loughshane, and the People's Banners all round will be glad of your assistance, as will also companies limited and unlimited to a very marvellous extent. Phineas wrote his article and promised to look in again, and so they went on. Mr. Quintus Slide continued to assure him that a "horgan" was indispensable to him, and Phineas began to accommodate his ears to the sound which had at first been so disagreeable. He found that his acquaintance, Mr. Slide, had ideas of his own, as to getting into the 'Ouse at some future time. "I always look upon the 'Ouse as my oyster, and 'ere's my sword," said Mr. Slide, brandishing an old quill pen. "And I feel that if once there I could get along. I do indeed. What is it a man wants? It's only pluck, — that he shouldn't funk because a 'undred other men are looking at him." Then Phineas asked him whether he had any idea of a constituency, to which Mr. Slide replied that he had no absolutely formed intention. Many boroughs, however, would doubtless be set free from aristocratic influence by the redistribution of seats which must take place, as Mr. Slide declared, at any rate in the next session. Then he named the borough of Loughton; and Phineas Finn, thinking of Saulsby, thinking of the Earl, thinking of Lady Lau-

ra, and thinking of Violet, walked away disgusted. Would it not be better that the quiet town, clustering close round the walls of Saulsby, should remain as it was, than that it should be polluted by the presence of Mr. Quintus Slide?

On the last day of the debate, at a few moments before four o'clock, Phineas encountered another terrible misfortune. He had been at the potted peas since twelve, and had on this occasion targed two or three commissariat officers very tightly with questions respecting cabbages and potatoes, and had asked whether the officers on board a certain ship did not always eat preserved asparagus while the men had not even a bean. I fear that he had been put up to this business by Mr. Quintus Slide, and that he made himself nasty. There was, however, so much nastiness of the kind going, that his little effort made no great difference. The conservative members of the Committee, on whose side of the House the inquiry had originated, did not scruple to lay all manner of charges to officers whom, were they themselves in power, they would be bound to support and would support with all their energies. About a quarter before four the members of the Committee had dismissed their last witness for the day, being desirous of not losing their chance of seats on so important an occasion, and hurried down into the lobby, — so that they might enter the House before prayers. Phineas here was button-holed by Barrington Erle, who said something to him as to the approaching division. They were standing in front of the door of the House, almost in the middle of the lobby, with a crowd of members around them, — on a spot which, as frequenters know, is hallowed ground, and must not be trodden by strangers. He was in the act of answering Erle, when he was touched on the arm, and on turning round, saw Mr. Clarkson. "About that little bill, Mr. Finn," said the horrible man, turning his chin round over his white cravat. "They always tell me at your lodgings that you ain't at home." By this time a policeman was explaining to Mr. Clarkson with gentle violence that he must not stand there, — that he must go aside into one of the corners. "I know all that," said Mr. Clarkson, retreating. "Of course I do. But what is a man to do when a gent won't see him at home?" Mr. Clarkson stood aside in his corner quietly, giving the policeman no occasion for further action against him; but in retreating he spoke loud, and there was a lull of voices around, and twenty members at least had heard what had been said. Phineas Finn no doubt

had his privilege, but Mr. Clarkson was determined that the privilege should avail him as little as possible.

It was very hard. The real offender, the Lord of the Treasury, the peer's son, with a thousand a year paid by the country, was not treated with this cruel persecution. Phineas had in truth never taken a farthing from any one but his father; and though doubtless he owed something at this moment, he had no creditor of his own that was even angry with him. As the world goes he was a clear man, — but for this debt of his friend Fitzgibbon. He left Barrington Erle in the lobby, and hurried into the House, blushing up to the eyes. He looked for Fitzgibbon in his place, but the Lord of the Treasury was not as yet there. Doubtless he would be there for the division, and Phineas resolved that he would speak a bit of his mind before he let his friend out of his sight.

There were some great speeches made on that evening. Mr. Gresham delivered an oration of which men said that it would be known in England as long as there were any words remaining of English eloquence. In it he taunted Mr. Turnbull with being a recreant to the people, of whom he called himself so often the champion. But Mr. Turnbull was not in the least moved. Mr. Gresham knew well enough that Mr. Turnbull was not to be moved by any words; — but the words were not the less telling to the House and to the country. Men, who heard it, said that Mr. Gresham forgot himself in that speech, forgot his party, forgot his strategy, forgot his longdrawn schemes, — even his love of applause, and thought only of his cause. Mr. Daubeny replied to him with equal genius, and with equal skill, — if not with equal heart. Mr. Gresham had asked for the approbation of all present and of all future reformers. Mr. Daubeny denied him both, — the one because he would not succeed, and the other because he would not have deserved success. Then Mr. Mildmay made his reply, getting up at about three o'clock, and uttered a prayer, — a futile prayer, — that this his last work on behalf of his countrymen might be successful. His bill was read a second time, as I have said before, in obedience to the casting vote of the Speaker, — but a majority such as that was tantamount to a defeat.

There was, of course, on that night no declaration as to what ministers would do. Without a meeting of the Cabinet, and without some further consideration, though each might know that the bill would be withdrawn, they could not say in what way they would act. But late as was the hour,

there were many words on the subject before members were in their beds. Mr. Turnbull and Mr. Monk left the House together, and perhaps no two gentlemen in it had in former sessions been more in the habit of walking home arm-in-arm and discussing what each had heard and what each had said in that assembly. Latterly these two men had gone strangely asunder in their paths, — very strangely for men who had for years walked so closely together. And this separation had been marked by violent words spoken against each other, — by violent words, at least, spoken against him in office by the one who had never contaminated his hands by the Queen's shilling. And yet, on such an occasion as this, they were able to walk away from the House arm-in-arm, and did not fly at each other's throat by the way.

"Singular enough, is it not," said Mr. Turnbull, "that the thing should have been so close?"

"Very odd," said Mr. Monk; "but men have said that it would be so all the week."

"Gresham was very fine," said Mr. Turnbull.

"Very fine, indeed. I never have heard anything like it before."

"Daubeny was very powerful too," said Mr. Turnbull.

"Yes; — no doubt. The occasion was great, and he answered to the spur. But Gresham's was the speech of the debate."

"Well; — yes; perhaps it was," said Mr. Turnbull, who was thinking of his own flight the other night, and who among his special friends had been much praised for what he had then done. But of course he made no allusion to his own doings, — or to those of Mr. Monk. In this way they conversed for some twenty minutes, till they parted; but neither of them interrogated the other as to what either might be called upon to do in consequence of the division which had just been effected. They might still be intimate friends, but the days of confidence between them were passed.

Phineas had seen Laurence Fitzgibbon enter the House, — which he did quite late in the night, so as to be in time for the division. No doubt he had dined in the House, and had been all the evening in the library, — or in the smoking-room. When Mr. Mildmay was on his legs making his reply, Fitzgibbon had sauntered in, not choosing to wait till he might be rung up by the bell at the last moment. Phineas was near him as they passed by the tellers, near him in the lobby, and near him again as they all passed back into the House. But at the last moment he thought that he would miss

his prey. In the crowd as they left the House he failed to get his hand upon his friend's shoulder. But he hurried down the members' passage, and just at the gate leading out into Westminster Hall he overtook Fitzgibbon walking arm-in-arm with Barrington Erle.

"Laurence," he said, taking hold of his countryman with a decided grasp, "I want to speak to you for a moment, if you please."

"Speak away," said Laurence. Then Phineas, looking up into his face, knew very well that he had been—what the world calls, dining.

Phineas remembered at the moment that Barrington Erle had been close to him when the odious money-lender had touched his arm and made his inquiry about that "little bill." He much wished to make Erle understand that the debt was not his own,—that he was not in the hands of usurers in reference to his own concerns. But there was a feeling within him that he still,—even still,—owed something to his friendship to Fitzgibbon. "Just give me your arm, and come on with me for a minute," said Phineas. "Erle will excuse us."

"Oh, blazes!" said Laurence, "what is it you're after? I ain't good at private conferences at three in the morning. We're all out, and isn't that enough for ye."

"I have been dreadfully annoyed to-night," said Phineas, "and I wished to speak to you about it."

"Bedad, Finn, my boy, and there are a good many of us are annoyed;—eh, Barrington?"

Phineas perceived clearly that though Fitzgibbon had been dining, there was as much of cunning in all this as of wine, and he was determined not to submit to such unlimited ill-usage. "My annoyance comes from your friend, Mr. Clarkson, who had the impudence to address me in the lobby of the House."

"And served you right, too, Finn, my boy. Why the devil did you sport your oak to him? He has told me all about it. There ain't such a patient little fellow as Clarkson anywhere, if you'll only let him have his own way. He'll look in, as he calls it, three times a week for a whole season, and do nothing further. Of course he don't like to be locked out."

"Is that the gentleman with whom the police interfered in the lobby?" Erle inquired.

"A confounded bill-discounter to whom our friend here has introduced me,—for his own purposes," said Phineas.

"A very gentleman-like fellow," said

Laurence. "Barrington knows him, I daresay. Look here, Finn, my boy, take my advice. Ask him to breakfast, and let him understand that the house will always be open to him." After this Laurence Fitzgibbon and Barrington Erle got into a cab together, and were driven away.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A CABINET MEETING.

AND now will the muses assist me while I sing an altogether new song? On the Tuesday the Cabinet met at the First Lord's official residence in Downing Street, and I will attempt to describe what, according to the bewildered brain of a poor fictionist, was said or might have been said, what was done or might have been done, on so august an occasion.

The poor fictionist very frequently finds himself to have been wrong in his description of things in general, and is told so roughly by the critics, and tenderly by the friends of his bosom. He is moved to tell of things of which he omits to learn the nature before he tells of them,—as should be done by a strictly honest fictionist. He catches salmon in October; or shoots his partridges in March. His dahlias bloom in June, and his birds sing in the autumn. He opens the opera-houses before Easter, and makes Parliament sit on a Wednesday evening. And then those terrible meshes of the law! How is a poor fictionist, in these excited days, to create the needed biting interest without legal difficulties; and how again is he to steer his little bark clear of so many rocks,—when the rocks and the shoals have been purposely arranged to make the taking of a pilot on board a necessity? As to those law meshes, a benevolent pilot will, indeed, now and again give a poor fictionist a helping hand,—not used, however, generally, with much discretion. But from whom is any assistance to come in the august matter of a Cabinet assembly? There can be no such assistance. No man can tell aught but they who will tell nothing. But then, again, there is this safety, that let the story be ever so mistold,—let the fiction be ever so far removed from the truth, no critic short of a Cabinet Minister himself can convict the narrator of error.

It was a large dingy room, covered with a Turkey carpet, and containing a dark polished mahogany dinner-table, on very heavy carved legs, which an old messenger was preparing at two o'clock in the day for the use of her Majesty's Ministers. The table would have been large enough for fourteen guests, and along the side further from the

fire there were placed some six heavy chairs, good comfortable chairs, stuffed at the back as well as the seat, — but on the side nearer to the fire the chairs were placed irregularly; and there were four armchairs, — two on one side and two on the other. There were four windows to the room, which looked on to St. James's Park, and the curtains of the windows were dark and heavy, — as became the gravity of the purposes to which that chamber was appropriated. In old days it had been the dining-room of one Prime Minister after another. To Pitt it had been the abode of his own familiar prandial Penates, and Lord Liverpool had been dull there among his dull friends for long year after year. The Ministers of the present day find it more convenient to live in private homes, and, indeed, not unfrequently carry their Cabinets with them. But, under Mr. Mildmay's rule, the meetings were generally held in the old room at the official residence. Thrice did the aged messenger move each armchair, now a little this way and now a little that, and then look at them as though something of the tendency of the coming meeting might depend on the comfort of its leading members. If Mr. Mildmay should find himself to be quite comfortable, so that he could hear what was said without a struggle to his ear, and see his colleagues' faces clearly, and feel the fire without burning his shins, it might be possible that he would not insist upon resigning. If this were so, how important was the work now confided to the hands of that aged messenger! When his anxious eyes had glanced round the room some half a dozen times, when he had touched each curtain, laid his hand upon every chair, and dusted certain papers which lay upon a side-table, — and which had been lying there for two years, and at which no one ever looked or would look, — he gently crept away and ensconced himself in an easy-chair not far from the door of the chamber. For it might be necessary to stop the attempt of a rash intruder on those secret counsels.

Very shortly there was heard the ring of various voices in the passages, — the voices of men speaking pleasantly, the voices of men with whom it seemed, from their tone, that things were doing well in the world. And then a cluster of four or five gentlemen entered the room. At first sight they seemed to be as ordinary gentlemen as you shall meet anywhere about Pall Mall on an afternoon. There was nothing about their outward appearance of the august wiggery of state craft, nothing of the ponderous dignity of ministerial position. That little

man in the square-cut coat, — we may almost call it a shooting-coat, — swinging an umbrella and wearing no gloves, is no less a person than the Lord Chancellor, — Lord Weazeling, — who made a hundred thousand pounds as Attorney-General, and is supposed to be the best lawyer of his age. He is fifty, but he looks to be hardly over forty, and one might take him to be, from his appearance, — perhaps a clerk in the War Office, well-to-do, and popular among his brother-clerks. Immediately with him is Sir Harry Coldfoot, also a lawyer by profession, though he has never practised. He has been in the House for nearly thirty years, and is now at the Home Office. He is a stout, healthy, grey-haired gentleman, who certainly does not wear the cares of office on his face. Perhaps, however, no minister gets more bullied than he by the press, and men say that he will be very willing to give up to some political enemy the control of the police, and the onerous duty of judging in all criminal appeals. Behind these come our friend Mr. Monk, young Lord Cantrip from the colonies next door, than whom no smarter young peer now does honour to our hereditary legislature, and Sir Marmaduke Morecombe, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Why Sir Marmaduke has always been placed in Mr. Mildmay's Cabinets nobody ever knew. As Chancellor of the Duchy he has nothing to do, — and were there anything, he would not do it. He rarely speaks in the House, and then does not speak well. He is a handsome man, or would be but for an assumption of grandeur in the carriage of his eyes, giving to his face a character of pomposity which he himself well deserves. He was in the Guards when young, and has been in Parliament since he ceased to be young. It must be supposed that Mr. Mildmay has found something in him, for he has been included in three successive liberal Cabinets. He has probably the virtue of being true to Mr. Mildmay, and of being duly submissive to one whom he recognizes as his superior.

Within two minutes afterwards the Duke followed, with Plantagenet Palliser. The Duke, as all the world knows, was the Duke of St. Bungay, the very front and head of the aristocratic old Whigs of the country, a man who has been thrice spoken of as Prime Minister, and who really might have filled the office had he not known himself to be unfit for it. The Duke has been consulted as to the making of Cabinets for the last five-and-thirty years, and is even now not an old man in appearance; — a fussy, popular, clever, conscientious man, whose

digestion has been too good to make politics a burden to him, but who has thought seriously about his country, and is one who will be sure to leave memoirs behind him. He was born in the semi-purple of ministerial influences, and men say of him that he is honestest than his uncle, who was Canning's friend, but not so great a man as his grandfather, with whom Fox once quarrelled, and whom Burke loved. Plantagenet Palliser, himself the heir to a dukedom, was the young Chancellor of the Exchequer, of whom some statesmen thought much as the rising star of the age. If industry, rectitude of purpose, and a certain clearness of intellect may prevail, Planty Pall, as he is familiarly called, may become a great Minister.

Then came Viscount Thrift by himself, — the First Lord of the Admiralty, with the whole weight of a new iron-clad fleet upon his shoulders. He has undertaken the Herculean task of cleansing the dockyards, — and with it the lesser work of keeping afloat a navy that may be esteemed by his countrymen to be the best in the world. And he thinks that he will do both, if only Mr. Mildmay will not resign; — an industrious, honest, self-denying nobleman, who works without ceasing from morn to night, and who hopes to rise in time to high things, — to the translating of Homer, perhaps, and the wearing of the Garter.

Close behind him there was a ruck of Ministers, with the much honoured grey-haired old Premier in the midst of them. There was Mr. Gresham, the Foreign Minister, said to be the greatest orator in Europe, on whose shoulders it was thought that the mantle of Mr. Mildmay would fall, — to be worn, however, quite otherwise than Mr. Mildmay had worn it. For Mr. Gresham is a man with no feelings for the past, void of historical association, hardly with memories, — living altogether for the future which he is anxious to fashion anew out of the vigour of his own brain. Whereas, with Mr. Mildmay, even his love of reform is an inherited passion for an old world Liberalism. And there was with them Mr. Legge Wilson, the brother of a peer, Secretary at War, a great scholar and a polished gentleman, very proud of his position as a Cabinet Minister, but conscious that he has hardly earned it by political work. And Lord Plinlimmon is with them, the Comptroller of India, — of all working lords the most jaunty, the most pleasant, and the most popular, very good at taking chairs at dinners, and making becoming speeches at the shortest notice, a man apparently very free and open in his

ways of life, — but cautious enough in truth as to every step, knowing well how hard it is to climb and how easy to fall. Mr. Mildmay entered the room leaning on Lord Plinlimmon's arm, and when he made his way up among the armchairs upon the rug before the fire, the others clustered around him with cheering looks and kindly questions. Then came the Privy Seal, our old friend Lord Brentford, last, — and I would say least, but that the words of no councillor could go for less in such an assemblage than will those of Sir Marmaduke Morecombe, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Mr. Mildmay was soon seated in one of the armchairs, while Lord Plinlimmon leaned against the table close at his elbow. Mr. Gresham stood upright at the corner of the chimney-piece furthest from Mr. Mildmay, and Mr. Palliser at that nearest to him. The Duke took the armchair close at Mr. Mildmay's left hand. Lord Plinlimmon was, as I have said, leaning against the table, but the Lord Chancellor, who was next to him, sat upon it. Viscount Thrift and Mr. Monk occupied chairs on the further side of the table, near to Mr. Mildmay's end, and Mr. Legge Wilson placed himself at the head of the table, thus joining them as it were into a body. The Home Secretary stood before the Lord Chancellor screening him from the fire, and the Chancellor of the Duchy, after waiting for a few minutes as though in doubt, took one of the vacant armchairs. The young lord from the Colonies stood a little behind the shoulders of his great friend from the Foreign Office; and the Privy Seal, after moving about for a while uneasily, took a chair behind the Chancellor of the Duchy. One armchair was thus left vacant, but there was no other comer.

"It is not so bad as I thought it would be," said the Duke, speaking aloud, but nevertheless addressing himself specially to his chief.

"It was bad enough," said Mr. Mildmay, laughing.

"Bad enough indeed," said Sir Marmaduke Morecombe, without any laughter.

"And such a good bill lost," said Lord Plinlimmon. "The worst of these failures is, that the same identical bill can never be brought in again."

"So that if the lost bill was best, the bill that will not be lost can only be second best," said the Lord Chancellor.

"I certainly did think that after the debate before Easter we should not have come to shipwreck about the ballot," said Mr. Mildmay.

"It was brewing for us all along," said Mr. Gresham, who then with a gesture of his hand and a pressure of his lips withheld words which he was nearly uttering, and which would not, probably, have been complimentary to Mr. Turnbull. As it was, he turned half round and said something to Lord Cantrip which was not audible to any one else in the room. It was worthy of note, however, that Mr. Turnbull's name was not once mentioned aloud at that meeting.

"I am afraid it was brewing all along," said Sir Marmaduke Morecombe gravely.

"Well, gentlemen, we must take it as we get it," said Mr. Mildmay, still smiling. "And now we must consider what we shall do at once." Then he paused as though expecting that counsel would come to him first from one colleague and then from another. But no such counsel came, and probably Mr. Mildmay did not in the least expect that it would come.

"We cannot stay where we are, of course," said the Duke. The Duke was privileged to say as much as that. But though every man in the room knew that it must be so, no one but the Duke would have said it, before Mr. Mildmay had spoken plainly himself.

"No," said Mr. Mildmay; "I suppose that we can hardly stay where we are. Probably none of us wish it, gentlemen." Then he looked round upon his colleagues, and there came a sort of an assent, though there were no spoken words. The sound from Sir Marmaduke Morecombe was louder than that from the others;—but yet from him it was no more than an attesting grunt. "We have two things to consider," continued Mr. Mildmay,—and though he spoke in a very low voice, every word was heard by all present,—"two things chiefly, that is; the work of the country, and the Queen's comfort. I propose to see her Majesty this afternoon at five,—that is, in something less than two hours' time, and I hope to be able to tell the House by seven what has taken place between her Majesty and me. My friend, his Grace, will do as much in the House of Lords. If you agree with me, gentlemen, I will explain to the Queen that it is not for the welfare of the country that we should retain our places, and I will place your resignations and my own in her Majesty's hands."

"You will advise her Majesty to send for Lord De Terrier," said Mr. Gresham.

"Certainly;—there will be no other course open to me."

"Or to her," said Mr. Gresham. To this remark from the rising Minister of the day, no word of reply was made; but of

those present in the room three or four of the most experienced servants of the Crown felt that Mr. Gresham had been imprudent. The Duke, who had ever been afraid of Mr. Gresham, told Mr. Palliser afterwards that such an observation should not have been made; and Sir Henry Coldfoot pondered upon it uneasily, and Sir Marmaduke Morecombe asked Mr. Mildmay what he thought about it. "Times change so much, and with the times the feelings of men," said Mr. Mildmay. But I doubt whether Sir Marmaduke quite understood him.

There was silence in the room for a moment or two after Mr. Gresham had spoken, and then Mr. Mildmay again addressed his friends. "Of course it may be possible that my Lord De Terrier may foresee difficulties, or may find difficulties which will oblige him, either at once, or after an attempt has been made, to decline the task which her Majesty will probably commit to him. All of us, no doubt, know that the arrangement of a government is not the most easy task in the world; and that it is not made the more easy by an absence of a majority in the House of Commons."

"He would dissolve, I presume," said the Duke.

"I should say so," continued Mr. Mildmay. "But it may not improbably come to pass that her Majesty will feel herself obliged to send again for some one or two of us, that we may tender to her Majesty the advice which we owe to her;—for me, for instance, or for my friend the Duke. In such a matter she would be much guided probably by what Lord De Terrier might have suggested to her. Should this be so, and should I be consulted, my present feeling is that we should resume our offices so that the necessary business of the session should be completed, and that we should then dissolve Parliament, and thus ascertain the opinion of the country. In such case, however, we should of course meet again."

"I quite think that the course proposed by Mr. Mildmay will be the best," said the Duke, who had no doubt already discussed the matter with his friend the Prime Minister in private. No one else said a word either of argument or disagreement, and the Cabinet Council was broken up. The old messenger, who had been asleep in his chair, stood up and bowed as the Ministers walked by him, and then went in and rearranged the chairs.

"He has as much idea of giving up as you or I have," said Lord Cantrip to his friend Mr. Gresham, as they walked arm-in-arm together from the Treasury Chambers across St. James's Park towards the clubs.

"I am not sure that he is not right," said Mr. Gresham.

"Do you mean for himself or for the country?" asked Lord Cantrip.

"For his future fame. They who have abdicated and have clung to their abdication have always lost by it. Cincinnatus was brought back again, and Charles V. is felt to have been foolish. The peaches of retired ministers of which we hear so often have generally been cultivated in a constrained seclusion;—or at least the world so believes." They were talking probably of Mr. Mildmay, as to whom some of his colleagues had thought it probable, knowing that he would now resign, that he would have to-day declared his intention of laying aside for ever the cares of office.

Mr. Monk walked home alone, and as he went there was something of a feeling of disappointment at heart, which made him ask himself whether Mr. Turnbull might not have been right in rebuking him for joining the Government. But this, I think, was in no way due to Mr. Mildmay's resignation, but rather to a conviction on Mr. Monk's part that he had contributed but little to his country's welfare by sitting in Mr. Mildmay's Cabinet.

CHAPTER XXX.

MR. KENNEDY'S LUCK.

AFTER the holding of that Cabinet Council of which the author has dared to attempt a slight sketch in the last chapter, there were various visits made to the Queen, first by Mr. Mildmay, and then by Lord De Terrier, afterwards by Mr. Mildmay and the Duke together, and then again by Lord De Terrier; and there were various explanations made to Parliament in each House, and rivals were very courteous to each other, promising assistance; and at the end of it the old men held their seats. The only change made was effected by the retirement of Sir Marmaduke Morecombe, who was raised to the peerage, and by the selection of—Mr. Kennedy to fill his place in the Cabinet. Mr. Kennedy during the late debate had made one of those speeches, few and far between, by which he had created for himself a Parliamentary reputation; but, nevertheless, all men expressed their great surprise, and no one could quite understand why Mr. Kennedy had been made a Cabinet Minister.

"It is impossible to say whether he is pleased or not," said Lady Laura, speaking of him to Phineas. "I am pleased, of course."

"His ambition must be gratified," said Phineas.

"It would be, if he had any," said Lady Laura.

"I do not believe in a man lacking ambition."

"It is hard to say. There are men who by no means wear their hearts upon their sleeves, and my husband is one of them. He told me that it would be unbecoming in him to refuse, and that was all he said to me about it."

The old men held their seats, but they did so as it were only upon further trial. Mr. Mildmay took the course which he had indicated to his colleagues at the Cabinet meeting. Before all the explanations and journeyings were completed, April was over, and the much-needed Whitsuntide holidays were coming on. But little of the routine work of the session had been done; and, as Mr. Mildmay told the House more than once, the country would suffer were the Queen to dissolve Parliament at this period of the year. The old Ministers would go on with the business of the country, Lord De Terrier with his followers having declined to take affairs into their hands; and at the close of the session, which should be made as short as possible, writs should be issued for new elections. This was Mr. Mildmay's programme, and it was one of which no one dared to complain very loudly.

Mr. Turnbull, indeed, did speak a word of caution. He told Mr. Mildmay that he had lost his bill, good in other respects, because he had refused to introduce the ballot into his measure. Let him promise to be wiser for the future, and to obey the manifested wishes of the country, and then all would be well with him. In answer to this, Mr. Mildmay declared that to the best of his power of reading the country, his countrymen had manifested no such wish; and that if they did so, if by the fresh election it should be shown that the ballot was in truth desired, he would at once leave the execution of their wishes to abler and younger hands. Mr. Turnbull expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the Ministers' answers, and said that the coming election would show whether he or Mr. Mildmay were right.

Many men, and among them some of his colleagues, thought that Mr. Mildmay had been imprudent. "No man ought ever to pledge himself to anything," said Sir Henry Coldfoot to the Duke;—"that is, to anything unnecessary." The Duke, who was very true to Mr. Mildmay, made no reply to this, but even he thought that his old friend had been betrayed into a promise

too rapidly. But the pledge was given, and some people already began to make much of it. There appeared leader after leader in the People's Banner urging the constituencies to take advantage of the Prime Minister's words, and to show clearly at the hustings that they desired the ballot. "You had better come over to us, Mr. Finn; you had indeed," said Mr. Slide. "Now's the time to do it, and show yourself a people's friend. You'll have to do it sooner or later, — whether or no. Come to us, and we'll be your horgan."

But in those days Phineas was something less in love with Mr. Quintus Slide than he had been at the time of the great debate, for he was becoming more and more closely connected with people who in their ways of living and modes of expression were very unlike Mr. Slide. This advice was given to him about the end of May, and at that time Lord Chiltern was living with him in the lodgings in Great Marlborough Street. Miss Pouncefoot had temporarily vacated her rooms on the first floor, and the Lord with the broken bones had condescended to occupy them. "I don't know that I like having a Lord," Bunce had said to his wife. "It'll soon come to you not liking anybody decent anywhere," Mrs. Bunce had replied; "but I shan't ask any questions about it. When you're wasting so much time and money at your dirty law proceedings, it's well that somebody should earn something at home."

There had been many discussions about the bringing of Lord Chiltern up to London, in all of which Phineas had been concerned. Lord Brentford had thought that his son had better remain down at the Willingford Bull; and although he said that the rooms were at his son's disposal should Lord Chiltern choose to come to London, still he said it in such a way that Phineas, who went down to Willingford, could not tell his friend that he would be made welcome in Portman Square. "I think I shall leave those diggings altogether," Lord Chiltern said to him. "My father annoys me by everything he says and does, and I annoy him by saying and doing nothing." Then there came an invitation to him from Lady Laura and Mr. Kennedy. Would he come to Grosvenor Place? Lady Laura pressed this very much, though in truth Mr. Kennedy had hardly done more than give a cold assent. But Lord Chiltern would not hear of it. "There is some reason for my going to my father's house," said he, "though he and I are not the best friends in the world; but there can be no reason for my going to the house of a man

I dislike so much as I do Robert Kennedy." The matter was settled in the manner told above. Miss Pouncefoot's rooms were prepared for him at Mr. Bunce's house, and Phineas Finn went down to Willingford and brought him up. "I've sold Bone-breaker," he said, — "to a young fellow whose neck will certainly be the sacrifice if he attempts to ride him. I'd have given him to you, Phineas, only you wouldn't have known what to do with him."

Lord Chiltern when he came up to London was still in bandages, though, as the surgeon said, his bones seemed to have been made to be broken and set again; and his bandages of course were a sufficient excuse for his visiting the house neither of his father nor his brother-in-law. But Lady Laura went to him frequently, and thus became acquainted with our hero's home and with Mrs. Bunce. And there were messages taken from Violet to the man in bandages, some of which lost nothing in the carrying. Once Lady Laura tried to make Violet think that it would be right, or rather not wrong, that they two should go together to Lord Chiltern's rooms.

"And would you have me tell my aunt, or would you have me not tell her?" Violet asked.

"I would have you do just as you pleased," Lady Laura answered.

"So I shall," Violet replied, "but I will do nothing that I should be ashamed to tell any one. Your brother professes to be in love with me."

"He is in love with you," said Lady Laura. "Even you do not pretend to doubt his faith."

"Very well. In those circumstances a girl should not go to a man's rooms unless she means to consider herself as engaged to him, even with his sister; — not though he had broken every bone in his skin. I know what I may do, Laura, and I know what I mayn't; and I won't be led either by you or by my aunt."

"May I give him your love?"

"No; — because you'll give it in a wrong spirit. He knows well enough that I wish him well; — but you may tell him that from me, if you please. He has from me all those wishes which one friend owes to another."

But there were other messages sent from Violet through Phineas Finn which she worded with more show of affection, — perhaps as much for the discomfort of Phineas as for the consolation of Lord Chiltern. "Tell him to take care of himself," said Violet, "and bid him not to have any more of those wild brutes that are not fit

for any Christian to ride. Tell him that I say so. It's a great thing to be brave; but what's the use of being foolhardy?"

The session was to be closed at the end of June, to the great dismay of London tradesmen and of young ladies who had not been entirely successful in the early season. But before the old Parliament was closed, and the writs for the new election were despatched, there occurred an incident which was of very much importance to Phineas Finn. Near the end of June, when the remaining days of the session were numbered by three or four, he had been dining at Lord Brentford's house in Portman Square in company with Mr. Kennedy. But Lady Laura had not been there. At this time he saw Lord Brentford not unfrequently, and there was always a word said about Lord Chiltern. The father would ask how the son occupied himself, and Phineas would hope, — though hitherto he had hoped in vain, — that he would induce the Earl to come and see Lord Chiltern. Lord Brentford could never be brought to that; but it was sufficiently evident that he would have done so, had he not been afraid to descend so far from the altitude of his paternal wrath. On this evening, at about eleven, Mr. Kennedy and Phineas left the house together, and walked from the Square through Orchard Street into Oxford Street. Here their ways parted, but Phineas crossed the road with Mr. Kennedy, as he was making some reply to a second invitation to Loughlinter. Phineas, considering what had been said before on the subject, thought that the invitation came late, and that it was not warmly worded. He had, therefore, declined it, and was in the act of declining it, when he crossed the road with Mr. Kennedy. In walking down Orchard Street from the Square he had seen two men standing in the shadow a few yards up a mews or small alley that was there, but had thought nothing of them. It was just that period of the year when there is hardly any of the darkness of night; but at this moment there were symptoms of coming rain, and heavy drops began to fall; and there were big clouds coming and going before the young moon. Mr. Kennedy had said that he would get a cab, but he had seen none as he crossed Oxford Street, and had put up his umbrella as he made his way towards Park Street. Phineas as he left him distinctly perceived the same two figures on the other side of Oxford Street, and then turning into the shadow of a butcher's porch, he saw them cross the street in the wake of Mr. Kennedy. It was now raining in earnest,

and the few passengers who were out were scudding away quickly, this way and that.

It hardly occurred to Phineas to think that any danger was imminent to Mr. Kennedy from the men, but it did occur to him that he might as well take some notice of the matter. Phineas knew that Mr. Kennedy would make his way down Park Street, that being his usual route from Portman Square towards his own home, and knew also that he himself could again come across Mr. Kennedy's track by going down North Audley Street to the corner of Grosvenor Square, and thence by Brook Street into Park Street. Without much thought, therefore, he went out of his own course down to the corner of the Square, hurrying his steps till he was running, and then ran along Brook Street, thinking as he went of some special word that he might say to Mr. Kennedy as an excuse, should he again come across his late companion. He reached the corner of Park Street before that gentleman could have been there, unless he also had run; but just in time to see him as he was coming on, — and also to see in the dark glimmering of the slight uncertain moonlight that the two men were behind him. He retreated a step backwards in the corner, resolving that when Mr. Kennedy came up, they two would go on together; for now it was clear that Mr. Kennedy was followed. But Mr. Kennedy did not reach the corner. When he was within two doors of it, one of the men had followed him up quickly, and had thrown something round his throat from behind him. Phineas understood well now that his friend was in the act of being garrotted, and that his instant assistance was needed. He rushed forward, and as the second ruffian had been close upon the footsteps of the first, there was almost instantaneously a concourse of the four men. But there was no fight. The man who had already nearly succeeded in putting Mr. Kennedy on to his back, made no attempt to seize his prey when he found that so unwelcome an addition had joined the party, but instantly turned to fly. His companion was turning also, but Phineas was too quick for him, and having seized on to his collar, held to him with all his power. "Dash it all," said the man, "didn't yer see as how I was a-hurrying up to help the gentleman myself?" Phineas, however, hadn't seen this, and held on gallantly, and in a couple of minutes the first ruffian was back again upon the spot in the custody of a policeman. "You've done it uncommon neat, sir," said the policeman, complimenting Phineas upon his performance. "If the gentleman ain't

none the worst for it, it'll have been a very pretty evening's amusement." Mr. Kennedy was now leaning against the railings, and hitherto had been unable to declare whether he was really injured or not, and it was not till a second policeman came up that the hero of the night was at liberty to attend closely to his friend.

Mr. Kennedy, when he was able to speak, declared that for a minute or two he had thought that his neck had been broken; and he was not quite convinced till he found himself in his own house, that nothing more serious had really happened to him than certain bruises round his throat. The policeman was for a while anxious that at any rate Phineas should go with him to the police-office; but at last consented to take the addresses of the two gentlemen. When he found that Mr. Kennedy was a member of Parliament, and that he was designated as Right Honourable, his respect for the garrotter became more great, and he began to feel that the night was indeed a night of great importance. He expressed unbounded admiration at Mr. Finn's success in his own line, and made repeated promises that the men should be forthcoming on the morrow. Could a cab be got? Of course a cab could be got. A cab was got, and within a quarter of an hour of the making of the attack, the two members of Parliament were on their way to Grosvenor Place.

There was hardly a word spoken in the cab, for Mr. Kennedy was in pain. When, however, they reached the door in Grosvenor Place, Phineas wanted to go, and leave his friend with the servants, but this the Cabinet Minister would not allow. "Of course you must see my wife," he said. So they went upstairs into the drawing-room, and then upon the stairs, by the lights of the house, Phineas could perceive that his companion's face was bruised and black with dirt, and that his cravat was gone.

"I have been garrotted," said the Cabinet Minister to his wife.

"What?"

"Simply that; — or should have been, if he had not been there. How he came there, God only knows."

The wife's anxiety, and then her gratitude, need hardly be described, — nor the astonishment of the husband, which by no means decreased on reflection, at the opportune reappearance in the nick of time of the man whom three minutes before the attack he had left in the act of going in the opposite direction.

"I had seen the men, and thought it best to run round by the corner of Grosvenor Square," said Phineas.

"May God bless you," said Lady Laura.

"Amen," said the Cabinet Minister.

"I think he was born to be my friend," said Lady Laura.

The Cabinet Minister said nothing more that night. He was never given to much talking, and the little accident which had just occurred to him did not tend to make words easy to him. But he pressed our hero's hand, and Lady Laura said that of course Phineas would come to them on the morrow. Phineas remarked that his first business must be to go to the police-office, but he promised that he would come down to Grosvenor Place immediately afterwards. Then Lady Laura also pressed his hand, and looked — she looked, I think, as though she thought that Phineas would only have done right had he repeated the offence which he had committed under the waterfall of Lough-linter.

"Garrotted!" said Lord Chiltern, when Phineas told him the story before they went to bed that night. He had been smoking, sipping brandy-and-water, and waiting for Finn's return. "Robert Kennedy garrotted!"

"The fellow was in the act of doing it."

"And you stopped him?"

"Yes; — I got there just in time. Wasn't it lucky?"

"You ought to be garrotted yourself. I should have lent the man a hand had I been there."

"How can you say anything so horrible? But you are drinking too much, old fellow, and I shall lock the bottle up."

"If there were no one in London drank more than I do, the wine merchants would have a bad time of it. And so the new Cabinet Minister has been garrotted in the street. Of course I'm sorry for poor Laura's sake."

"Luckily he's not much the worse for it; — only a little bruised."

"I wonder whether it's on the cards he should be improved by it; — worse, except in the way of being strangled, he could not be. However, as he's my brother-in-law, I'm obliged to you for rescuing him. Come, I'll go to bed. I must say, if he was to be garrotted I should like to have been there to see it." That was the manner in which Lord Chiltern received the tidings of the terrible accident which had occurred to his near relative.

From the Sunday Magazine.

"ECCE HOMO."

A LETTER FROM A GERMAN CLERGYMAN.

YOU ask me whether I have read "Ecce Homo." Of course I have, and not once only, but three or four times, not to speak of those moments when I took up the book to read over and over again certain passages which had particularly struck me. Nor can you be surprised at hearing this, since you yourself admit that it is a book which cannot be brought into contact with a thinking mind without making a deep impression upon it. But in my opinion this only holds good of such minds as are sufficiently accustomed to the English method and form of thinking to be able, without too much exertion, to follow the course of the English reasoning, and, without too much self-restraint, to hail the results to which it leads. But of such minds, you know, there are not very many in this country. John Bull's peculiar cut of mind has always been a puzzle to the *Deutsche Michel*, and *vice versa*.

And this observation, to a certain extent, includes my answer to the first of your two questions—what the German public thinks of "Ecce Homo?" To be frank, it has no opinion at all on the subject, for the simple reason that it does not know the book; and this no doubt owing to the fact that, so far as I am aware, there is as yet no translation of it in our language. Our theologians, as well as the religious people here, read little English, comparatively speaking. But the very fact that we have no translation of "Ecce Homo" is, in my opinion, a sign that the book does not meet the wants of the German people. It shows that those among us who have read the book dare not risk advising a publisher to publish it. In short, good judges among us deem it doubtful whether the book would "take." And this is simply because it is so out-and-out English.

But let me not be misunderstood. Notwithstanding the great difference which obtains between the English character and ours, we admire the English as a great nation, and enjoy many of the productions of English genius. Shakspeare, you know is read and studied amongst us with intense delight. Your great historians and excellent novelists fill the minds not only of our learned men, but of the mass of the people. You know as well as I do how welcome to us are your classics, both modern and of early date; but this chiefly holds good of works in science and fiction. Though there is much in the spirit of it which we shall never try to imitate, yet we can understand,

admire, and relish it. But it is quite different when we come across the philosophical and theological productions of your countrymen. Here you present to us that side of your mind to which we can hardly find a corresponding side in ours. The difference may be expressed in two words. You are *practical*, we are *speculative*. I do not mean, of course, that the English are altogether devoid of speculative power, nor that we know nothing of the practical; but the love of the practical is so prominent an agent in your national character, that even where you deal with the speculative it seems to us as if you could not forbear submitting it to the stereotyped manœuvres of your practical method. Even that which we look up to as the most sublime and ideal, you treat as if it were only some sort of raw material to be passed through your mill and sent forth well packed, ticketed, and labelled ready for common practical use. You, on your part again, cannot help shaking your heads with an expression of pity not unmixed with a feeling of amusement when you see us dig, dig, dig, to get to the *under* and *undermost* ground of the matter, or soar up almost beyond sight to measure the distance of the furthestmost point. You cannot understand what all that diving and flying is for. In your opinion enough has already been brought up from the deep and sent down from above for laying the foundation of some useful work on *terra firma*. Well, sometimes you are right, and sometimes we are right, and very often, after some time has elapsed, one party thankfully acknowledges that it has learnt something from the other. But, nevertheless, it will, in my opinion, take a long time before the two minds find the true point of conjunction, and know how to appreciate each other so as to merge main principles of each into one common good. As it is at present, there are numbers of your philosophical and religious books which are in almost every English house, but which will never be found in any of our houses. To our taste, they contain too much of matter-of-fact reading, are too business-like, and tend too much to turn everything spiritual, even the church itself, into a big workshop. When, then, we hear of books on moral or religious topics (except, indeed, sermons, biblical commentaries, and the like) which make a *fièvre* in your land, we involuntarily expect to read such words as "society," "committee," "report," "meeting," "balance-sheet," "work," "labour," &c., on almost every page, and we wonder if the title is not something like this:—"Plenty to do,

and how to do it," or, "How to make the best of both worlds," or, "English Hearts and English Hands."

Now "Ecce Homo" is exactly the book we should expect from English heterodoxy attempting to give us a character-picture of our Lord. Its title is quite correct. It considers our Saviour exclusively as a Man, not however as a *homo patiens*, but as a *homo practicus*. In this respect the book is read with great interest by those of my friends who are sufficiently at home in your language to understand it. It is regarded as a good specimen of the thorough English method in handling the Gospel story outside the pale of orthodox church tradition. It shows us what sort of representation of Christ we should have got had the apostles been Englishmen, and a little less orthodox than they were. It is thus looked upon as a national curiosity, but at the same time as a national master-piece. It astounds us by showing us how the Gospel matter having first been reduced almost to its minimum, the English mind can spin an incredible amount of useful observations out of it, and can place the Gospel story in such an original relation to the conditions of civilised society at present, as to stand in quite an unexpected, if not unprecedented, light.

Ours is the age of the nationalities in matters of ethics, religion, and theology, as well as other things. For centuries Christian theology has been accustomed to regard the four Gospels as the only authentic, infallible, and, even in minute particulars, perfectly accurate historical records of our Lord's life. Out of these four documents arose an image of the Lord's character and work, which was generally accepted in the Christian church, especially after the suppression of the so-called Arian and Nestorian heresies. A certain authorized representation of the incarnate Son of God soon stereotyped itself in the minds of the people, and through generations continued invariably the same. It was the *catholic* image of Christ, as it was fancied *ab omnibus, ubique, semper*. It showed no peculiar national type. Whether you worshipped in Rome or in London, in Hamburg or in Moscow, it was everywhere the same Christ you worshipped, for it was not exclusively the Roman Catholic, nor the Greek Catholic, but the purely Catholic image which stood before the minds of all the churches. Nor did the Reformers alter anything in this ancient traditional picture. They greatly differed from Rome as to dogma and church discipline, but there was little or no difference between them and that

Church as to the conception of the character or of the work, or, in a word, of the person of Christ. But in the beginning of the last century Neology began to break up the catholic ground, and Rationalism not only rejected the inspiration and the infallibility of the Gospels, but even called in question their historical correctness. Various portraits of Christ have been tried by the heads or representatives of the various theological schools. Still they were more like faint sketches than elaborate pictures. The age of the biographies, least of all of the biographies of Christ, had not yet come.

But that age is ours. From the day when Strauss and the Tübingen school applied the instruments of their all-destructive criticism to the most holy and venerable, and reduced the Gospel image of Christ to atoms, many learned men in different countries have set about reconstructing a statue out of the scattered fragments. Of course, the catholic image was condemned once and for ever. But such a vandalic outrage as Strauss had committed upon the Gospel history, was too bad in the opinion of the modern builders. Uncertain, mythical, fabulous as the Gospel records were in many respects deemed to be, yet it was held that enough of historical truth was left to supply the required materials for the composition, if not of a complete biography, at least of a character-picture of Jesus of Nazareth. Various experiments have accordingly been made. But every one having now the liberty of determining for himself what is fact and what is fiction in the Gospels, the choice of materials was no longer qualified by history, but left to taste. Full scope was thus given for the individuality, the temper, the favourite ideas, the hobbies, and even the party-spirit and national peculiarities of the composer to play upon the spirit and form of his composition. Hence various biographies and portraits of Christ have sprung up during the last thirty years. With the exception of a few features common to all, these often differ as much from each other as a Basle clergyman differs from a Parisian abbé, or a Genevan professor from a Stockholm advocate. What above all distinguishes them from each other is that peculiar colour which is more or less common to such of them as have originated in the same country. They might easily be grouped according to the nationalities. Catholicity is out of the question. Now-a-days we have a separate Christ for each nation. Gfrörer's, Weisse's, Schenkel's Jesus is a German philosopher

dressed in the garb of a Jewish rabbi. The Jesus of Renan is an admirable French enthusiast, living among the bucolic scenery of Galilee, and scheming sublime but sometimes too fantastic theories for the reform of mankind. And the Jesus of "Ecce Homo" is an admirable English moralist and philanthropist, who in some mysterious way suddenly makes his appearance in the district of Capernaum, to fill the minds of the people with a wonderful affection called the "enthusiasm of humanity," to give them "plenty to do," and to teach them "how to do it," so that they may be able "to make the best of both worlds." What struck me, or I should almost say what amused me, the other day, when I took up the book afresh, was the pleasure the writer evidently takes in representing the kingdom of Christ or the church (for these are with him synonymous) as a "society." One involuntarily fancies our Lord as its president, and the band of his apostles or ministers as a kind of executive committee. It is true, he says (p. 309, new edition of 1867), "No committee drew up rules for the universal commonwealth," but this may be said of almost every organized society, inasmuch as it took its origin from one or two men who planned it, and laid down the general principles upon which it was to work. But your author knows history too well not to admit that during the short period in which the Gentile church worked without committees, and consequently represented anything but an "organized society," it was *not* universal or catholic; and that most likely it would never have become universal, had it not been taken up by bands of men called "bishops," who formed themselves into committees called "councils," which, backed by the strong arm of the worldly power, "drew up such rules" as were indispensable to make a "universal commonwealth" of the church. From that time, undoubtedly, the Christian church completely assumed the form of an organized society, with its boards, committees, divisions, and sub-divisions, of which Christ might be imagined as the invisible, perhaps only the honorary, president, while by-and-by a vice-president became visible in Rome, who after a long, often successful, administration in various divisions of that vast body, saw other vice-presidents spring up. In spite of his anathemata, these, up to the present day, share with him the administration of that society. Strange to say, however, your author, notwithstanding his great historical knowledge and keen perception, has allowed himself to get under one very delusive impression.

He seems to hold that that vast organized society—which by the administrative skill of so many venerable committees on the one hand, and by the sword of Constantine, Charlemagne, and other *Reges Christianissimi* on the other, has been forced into "a universal commonwealth"—is that "kingdom of God" which Jesus of Nazareth meant, when He taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come!" The writer from the outset accepts this as a matter of fact, without even trying to prove the correctness of his opinion. Evidently it has not even occurred to him that proof could be expected of what looked so like a truism. How could a moralist such as he is suppose that Christ, whom he regards as the most perfect moralist, when conceiving (to use an expression of the writer) "the most daring of all speculative dreams," that of founding a kingdom of God, could have thought of anything save just such a church as now covers the civilised world, and which, notwithstanding all its faults and failures, so admirably answers the idea of a vast universal well-organized society for promoting morality and philanthropy! "The triumph of the Christian church," he cries enthusiastically, "is that it is there—that the most daring of all speculative dreams, instead of being found impracticable, has been carried into effect!" (p. 307.) And what is that Christian church according to one of the writer's descriptions? "A virtue-making institution" (p. xvii.) I really wonder he did not go one step farther and call it a *virtue-manufacturing* institution. We could scarcely expect anything short of that from a heterodox English moralist. What a pity it cannot be proved that Nazareth was a town in Yorkshire! So this is the New Jerusalem which, according to the writer's conclusive sentence, "descended out of heaven from God." In the days of the Apostle Paul, that Jerusalem was yet "above" (Gal. iv. 26). It must consequently have come down since then. And when may that have happened? The writer does not tell us. I suppose it must have been when Constantine, at the head of his legions, saw in the air the cross with the inscription I. H. S., or when Charlemagne baptized the Saxons wholesale by hunting them into the river. What prodigious manufacturers of Christians those mighty men were! Statues should be erected to them in London, in Manchester, or Bradford. They were undoubtedly the chief contributors towards "carrying the most daring of all speculative dreams into effect." Without their energetic help, the great "virtue-making

institution" would never have come into existence.

I have called the writer heterodox. Notwithstanding the cautiousness with which, all through the book, he tries to keep up an orthodox appearance, he cannot help betraying himself now and then, as being what the venerable heads of your Church would call "an heretic." This is especially clear from the light in which he regards the Scriptures. He implicitly confesses to suspecting the fourth Gospel as being "a freely-idealized portraiture of Christ" (p. x.). To him "nothing is more natural than that exaggerations and even inventions should be mixed with genuine facts in the Gospel biographies of Christ" (p. 9). The spirit of prophecy in the Old Testament, being "somewhat perplexed by the new institution of an earthly king in Israel, found an escape from this perplexity by picturing the earthly king as standing in a peculiar relation to the heavenly," &c. (p. 22). Surely, this is anything but orthodox phraseology. Do not suppose, however, that we Germans are so very much frightened at it. For more than a century you are aware we have been accustomed to that sort of thing. Indeed, we are to some extent thankful for it. It has greatly contributed toward curing us a little of *orthodoxolatry* on the one side, and *heterodoxophobia* on the other. We have been brought to see that there may be a great deal of error in orthodox traditions, and not a little truth in heresy. So, in our estimation, the writer of "Ecce Homo" would not be a bit less of a Christian for supposing the Gospels here and there interpolated with spurious passages, or for his rejecting the fourth Gospel as a kind of historical romance. Only we should at least expect him to give us, in a book like this, the grounds of his criticism, and to tell us which portions of the Gospel biographies he regards as "exaggerations and inventions." We should maintain that the latter was his duty as a public writer who professes to "endeavour to describe Christ as a Moralist speaking with authority, and perpetuating his doctrine by means of a society" (p. xi.). Indeed, in a book in which expressions like the above occur, a specified account of the relation in which the writer stands to the canonical writings of the New Testament cannot well be absent without placing him in a light false in many respects, perhaps, but caused by the enigmatical, and I should almost say inconsiderate, way, in which he expresses himself. The reader, having learnt from the writer that there are exaggerations and inventions mixed with the facts of the Gospel narra-

tive, has a right to suppose, or at least to surmise, that the author comprises under these "exaggerations and inventions" all such explicit and important testimonies of the Gospels about Christ as he, in his book, does not even so much as allude to. Thus, for instance, we do not read a word about the Lord's miraculous birth, nor about the atoning power of his blood, notwithstanding that the book contains one whole chapter on "Christ's royalty," and two on "the law of forgiveness." This all but forces us to suppose that the writer regards the story of the Lord's miraculous birth as one of the "inventions," and the testimony about the sin-atoning power of his blood as one of the "exaggerations." Perhaps this supposition is wrong. But then we certainly have the right to ask the writer, "How is it that you, who believe that Christ is God, and that his blood was shed for the remission of our sins, can pretend to having tried anything like a true description of the great 'Moralist' and his 'society,' while in your description of his moral system, the gratitude for atonement through his blood, as the specific Christian motive for every virtue, is absent, and in your description of the work and character of his 'society,' not only is the proclamation of forgiveness of sins through his blood not mentioned, but not a single word is said about the divine honor and adoration which that society deems it its highest duty permanently to pay to its Founder?" Or, after all, the supposition may be right. But then we are justified in asking the author, "What grounds have you for eliminating from historical documents concerning our Lord's life two statements, the rejection of which cannot take place without making Jesus of Nazareth altogether a different person from what the writers of these documents represent him to be?"

It is true, a few expressions occur in the book from which it would follow that the writer believes both in the divine nature of our Lord, and in the atoning power of his blood. In one place he tells us (p. 302), "that it was the will of God to beget no second son like Christ." In another (p. 156), that "Christ was destined to lay down his life for men." But, as these expressions occur only once or twice, it is not easy to say what meaning the writer attaches to them. If he believes—which is probable from the spirit pervading the whole book—that all men are children of God, and consequently may be said to be begotten of God, the former of the two expressions only tells us that Christ was the most eminent among men. And if he believes,

which again is probable on the same ground, that Christ only died as a martyr, the latter of the two expressions only tells us that Christ laid down his life to secure the enthusiasm of mankind for his person and doctrine. In a word, there is a vagueness, and, I should almost say, a certain oracularness of expression in the book with reference to the most important doctrinal questions, which makes it very hazy and the perusal of it often tantalizing. Even granting the author full liberty to consider Christ exclusively in his human character, it is impossible to see what use there can be in his keeping his opinion in regard to the testimonies of Scripture concerning the Lord's divine nature wrapt in an impenetrable fog, from which only ambiguous-sounding voices occasionally issue forth, dissatisfying alike to heterodox and orthodox, because they tell the former too much and the latter too little. This vagueness, this ambiguity cannot but tell unfavourably upon the image of the Lord which the writer desires to place before our view. After having read the book over and over again, we cannot precisely tell what sort of being the author tries to picture, endeavouring to win our enthusiastic devotion for him. We lay down the book with a cloudy impression that we have read about a very extraordinary person, something between a man and a God, since all the writer tells us about him is too much for the one and too little for the other. But how that demi-god came among us, in what precise relation he stands to the future history of mankind, and in what connection he stands with the Almighty God—these are questions about which the author leaves us altogether in the dark.

It is true, the writer tells us in the preface to the fifth edition (p. xix.), that he has not "concealed his theological opinions," but only "not published them." But "not to publish" is tantamount to concealment where publication may reasonably be expected, and where it is required for the clear description and elucidation of the subject matter. The writer's assertion, however, that he has not published his theological opinions, is incorrect. He has unquestionably published a little, sometimes tolerably much, but never quite so much as was necessary. And here lies his principal fault. Had he published nothing of his theological opinions, the book, which "was expressly announced as a fragment" (p. xviii.), would have strictly answered to that announcement. Everybody would have felt that it was only meant to describe one side of our Lord's personality and work. But then it would unquestionably have been a

very dry and uninteresting book. For can anything be imagined more shallow and unsatisfactory than a description of the character and work of Jesus, from which the supernatural or divine is strictly eliminated? Nay, I would ask, is it possible altogether to leave out the supernatural or divine without making such a caricature of Christ as, for instance, Renan did? Evidently the writer did not wish to come to this. He felt that the pouring in of a few drops of the theological spirit was indispensable to make Jesus a man worthy to shine at the head of the human race. A man who is a "moralist speaking with authority" (p. xi.), but who never performs a miracle—a hero willing to die in the noblest contest, but never rising victorious out of the grave—a founder of a universal society which is to comprise the whole human race, but who, like all other mortal men, after his death leaves, or at least seems to leave, that society to itself, without giving any evidence of his being able to look after it—such a man, of course, could not be the *homo* whom the human race might with any propriety be invited to "behold." So the author allows the miracles to come in, and once or twice we get far in the distance a glimpse of the Resurrection. Once, indeed, we are told that Christ after his death "withdrew to a secret post of observation, from whence he visited his people for the future only in refreshing inspirations and great acts of providential justice" (p. 102); and we learn that Christ Jesus is "the Eternal Sovereign of the Universal Commonwealth," which he founded (p. 208); and thus from the theological lamp there is poured down just so much splendour upon the anthropological side of Christ's appearance as is necessary to raise him up to the top of humanity as the man "in whose person is gathered up the majesty of men, which we worship" (p. 208). But the author has overlooked that by doing this he has altogether spoiled the purposed fragmentary character of his book, and made something of it which is neither a fragment nor a whole, or, to use a phrase common among us, something which is too grand for a *serviette*, and too small for a table napkin. We now have a mixture of two fragments—1° the human side of Christ as a fragment of his personality, and 2° a fragment, or, I should rather say, a few fragmentary indications of the divine side of his wonderful being. The latter, however, stand altogether out of proportion to the former. They serve only to form a sort of framework to the picture. But the divine coming in only as something accessory to the human cannot fail to produce a bad

effect. Those critics who, as the writer tells us (p. xviii.), have sought the cause of that bad impression in his having said "half truths" have not, in my opinion, hit the mark. It is not the incompleteness, but the abasement of the truths themselves that grates upon the feeling. The divine is here made use of somewhat in the same way as a novelist would use a princedom or a rich marriage, to make his hero come off splendidly. It is the *Man Jesus* who does everything, but then that which he does is so astoundingly colossal, that a little bit of the divine must needs be had recourse to in order to prop it up, and guard it against overbalancing itself. Thus the divine is put in a kind of menial relation to the human. It is this which offends the religious sense of so many, and the devotional feeling of not a few. One can almost better brook the Jesus of Renan, who puts that which cannot well be explained from the regularly human to the account of "un aimable enthousiasme fanatique." The exaltation of the human so as to supersede the divine is bad, but the lowering of the divine so as only to serve to glorify the human is far worse.

I see that your excellent statesman, Mr. Gladstone, discusses the question in *Good Words* whether a representation of Christ as viewed in the light of his humanity alone is justifiable. The question is a most important one. It was, as far as I remember, first broached amongst us some fifty years ago by Schleiermacher, and then discussed all through the German theological world. It was elicited by the common tendency of the orthodox to merge the Lord's humanity in his divinity; a tendency which has kept the orthodox churches continually on the verge of *docetism*. Wherever that tendency is, nothing is more needed than a representation of the Lord in his true humanity. That we only can be saved by God if we are to be saved at all, is a truism which the very heathen believed long before Christ was born. He, therefore, who makes of the Saviour nothing but a God, by always and exclusively pointing at his eternal divinity, his omnipotence, his omniscience, and so on, is little above a heathen, even although he should occasionally mention the death and burial of Christ. The man who is truly, specifically Christian, begins where it is believed that the Omnipotent and Omniscient One became a helpless, unconscious mortal Babe, or, as the fourth Gospel has it, that the Word, the Logos (not "was made," but) became (*egeneto*) flesh. To proclaim this greatest of all mysteries; to place it in its true historical

light; to prove from the life of Jesus that it was a fact; to show from his experience by words and deeds that he who professed and with power has been *proved* (*horistheis*) to be the Son of God, was really a man, in all things made like unto us—this is to proclaim the Gospel, the glad intelligence which assures us that God was *honest* and not acting a part when he appeared among us in a human form. Nothing is more adapted than the faithful proclamation of this fact in all its countless applications and consequences to bring to light the truth that God loves man, and that it is his purpose to raise the human race to the highest imaginable pitch of development. But to make the representation of the person of Christ have that effect, the way is most assuredly not to be sought in rendering (to use Mr. Gladstone's words) "the human aspect so predominant as to be at first sight almost the only one." Such a representation proves nothing, because it proves too much. It is possible that the writer of "*Ecce Homo*" for himself believes that Christ is God; at least he says nowhere in his book that he does not believe it. But then, impelled, perhaps, by the desire of vindicating Christ's true manhood, he has in his ardour allowed himself to be carried so far as to present to his readers the picture of a Christ who so thoroughly became man that He ceased to be God. In that case his book exhibits the very opposite of that which he attacks. To oppose the error which merges the manhood in the divinity, he merges the divinity in the manhood.

The question whether a representation of Christ from the human side of his personality alone is justifiable finds its correct answer in the observation that such a representation can never be historically true. It must always of necessity turn out a failure. "*Ecce Homo*" is a confirmation of that observation. It represents the Founder of the kingdom of God as a perfect Man, who was in the possession of a certain amount of miraculous power. This is not the representation of Christ's person in the historical documents which the writer adopts as the sources from which he draws his knowledge. They represent the Founder of the kingdom of God as a Man who was the Son of God. Even Mark, whom the writer chiefly follows, introduces Christ in this character in the very first verse of his Gospel. Now it does not need to be observed here that, whatever signification *we* occidentals may attribute to the term, "*The Son of God*," this much is certain, that an Israelite meant by it a man who had no human father, but whose father was God, the

Creator Himself. It stands to reason that such a man is a different person from one who only possesses miraculous power. Even where both are represented as performing one and the same work—as, for instance, teaching the people—the reader of Mark will regard both the Man and his work in a light altogether different from that in which the reader of "Ecce Homo" regards Him. Suppose a man attends a meeting at which a humble but talented schoolmaster delivers an excellent lecture on social reform. The lecturer, his lecture, and the meeting may be supposed to make a certain impression upon that man. But let us again suppose that after the lecture is over he comes to know that the lecturer was not merely a schoolmaster, but the son of the king, the heir to the throne. Will the impression of the lecturer, his lecture, and the meeting upon the man's mind continue unaltered? Will not the lecturer at once become to him quite a different historical person from what he was before, and the lecture assume quite a different significance, and the meeting become altogether a different event in history? And will he not be ready to admit that owing to his ignorance, his former impression was erroneous?

Still Mr. Gladstone seems not uninclined to advocate the writer's method from an educational, or pedagogic point of view. He points to the author's own confession in the preface to his book, that he wrote it for the satisfaction of his own mind. Mr. Gladstone accordingly calls the book "a work of self-education," in which the reader ought to see the gradual progress with which the writer, tracing the biography of Jesus from point to point, came to learn how the promising young man of Nazareth became the great Founder of the Kingdom of God. Of course, this alters the case altogether. Placed in that light, the book is to be regarded as the first essay of a tyro in the Christian religion. Indeed, Mr. Gladstone seems not far from the supposition that the writer is a man who "addressed himself to a subject never, it would seem, effectually brought home to his understanding through the channels of tradition and authority." It is much to the credit of such a man that he tries to come to the true knowledge of the subject by applying to the original documents themselves. But it is a question whether the publication of such an essay can have any real value to Christians who are no longer tyros, except that of satisfying their curiosity as respects knowing what effect the study of the Gospel narrative may produce upon the mind of a well-educated inquirer who comes *tabula rasa* to the subject.

But it may also be asked whether such a book, being composed by a novice, can be expected to exhibit that correctness of inference, or that depth of insight, which characterize the works of the fully initiated and well-instructed veteran, and whether it is not likely to do much harm to the mind of the ignorant, the inexperienced, and the doubting. Such questions as these I am not prepared to answer. I, for one, cannot see how there could be any call for the publication of such a "tentative" experiment. Indeed, one could beforehand have predicted the unsatisfactory results it must lead to, on learning from the writer that it was at the outset his resolution "to accept those conclusions about Jesus, not which church doctors, or even apostles, have sealed with their authority, but which the facts themselves, critically weighed, appear to warrant" (p. xxi.). This means, in other words, that the writer was resolved to accept those conclusions, not which apostles, but which he himself, after what he calls a critical weighing, would draw from the facts. Accordingly we find scarcely so much as an occasional allusion to the teachings of the apostles. The writer talks about Jesus as if there had never been anything said about Him by Peter, John, or Paul. Of course he knew the conclusions which these first eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses drew from the Lord's death and resurrection. But he leaves them altogether unnoticed. He has emancipated himself from the instruction of those men whom Jesus himself had appointed as teachers, to instruct the world about the facts of his life. It stands to reason that with this method the writer must arrive at conclusions which are very unsatisfactory to a church taught by the Apostles. It is true the writer appeals to the facts, but it does not follow that his conclusions drawn from those facts are correct. We know but too well what is included in the favourite cry of the so-called impartial critics: "We don't want theories; all we want is *facts*; allow *them* to speak!" This is a hollow phrase, and usually comes to this: "Give us facts, and we shall give you our theories about them!" Facts *don't* speak. Taken by themselves, they are dead things. Man *makes* facts speak; and as the man is, so also, as a rule, are the tales which he allows the facts to tell. Both the Pharisees and the Apostles witnessed the same facts. They told the former that Jesus had a devil, and the latter that He was the Son of God. Both Paul and the writer of "Ecce Homo" have studied the life of Jesus. Both have in their writings "furnished an answer to the question,—

What was Christ's object in founding the society which is called by his name?" (p. xxii.) But according to the one that object was the establishing of a happy, well-organized, morally pure "universal commonwealth" on earth; in which "the majesty of men was to be worshipped, gathered up in the person of its Eternal Sovereign, Christ Jesus." According to the other, that object was the gathering of an elect body of men, separated from the universal mass of mankind, whose citizenship (*politeuma*, Phil. iii. 20) was not to be on earth but in heaven, and who consequently were not to mind (*phronein*, Col. iii. 2) things on the earth, but to seek those things which are above; who were not to worship the majesty of men, but to worship God through Jesus Christ their Lord; who, while a "peculiar people, zealous of good works,"

during their short sojourn as pilgrims here below, were to hold themselves in constant readiness at any moment to be caught up to meet their Lord in the air, since it was their destiny, in the closest union with Him, to reign with Him, to judge the angels and the world (1 Cor. vi. 3), and in that high majestic dignity to establish, with and through Him, a universal commonwealth, which not only was to comprise the inhabitants of the earth, but also those of the heavenly places.

You see there is some difference between the conclusions which the writer of "Ecce Homo" has drawn from the facts of the Gospel, and those which Paul drew. Permit me, however, to pause here for the present, as I see that my letter is already too long. Next month I hope to send you a continuation of my criticism.

THE WINGED WORSHIPPERS.

Addressed to Two Swallows that flew into Chauncy Place Church during Divine Service.

BY CHARLES SPRAGUE.

Gay, guiltless pair,
What seek ye from the fields of heaven?
Ye have no need of prayer,
Ye have no sins to be forgiven.

Why perch ye here,
Where mortals to their Maker bend?
Can your pure spirits fear
The God ye never could offend?

Ye never knew
The crimes for which we come to weep.
Penance is not for you,
Blessed wanderers of the upper deep.

To you 'tis given
To wake sweet Nature's untaught lays;
Beneath the arch of heaven
To chirp away a life of praise.

Then spread each wing,
Far, far above, o'er lake and lands,
And join the choirs that sing
In yon blue dome not reared with hands.

Or, if ye stay,
To note the consecrated hour,
Teach me the airy way,
And let me try your envied power.

Above the crowd,
On upward wings could I but fly,

I'd bathe in yon bright cloud,
And seek the stars that gem the sky.

'Twere Heaven indeed
Through fields of trackless light to soar,
On Nature's charms to feed,
And Nature's own great God adore.

—Transcript.

BIRDNOTES.

Hark!
'Tis the lark,
Singing where the clouds are breaking,
"I see the sun, —
Sing, sing, sing, sing!"
Soaring up on high,
"Sing, sing, sing, sing!"
Dropping down the sky,
Mad with mirth of his own making,
Singing where the clouds are breaking,
"Dark days are done!"

Hush!
'Tis the thrush,
Singing where the green leaves glisten,
"Dark days are done!
Joy! joy! joy! joy!"
Fills his swelling throat,
"Joy! joy! joy! joy!"
Breathes in every note,
Calling all sweet birds to listen;
High and low, where green leaves glisten,
Answers every one.

ISA CRAIG KNOX.

—Sunday Magazine.

From The Saturday Review.

PERIODICAL WRITERS.

THERE are born newspaper writers; and there are born magazine writers; and there are born writers in quarterlies. There are of course, besides these, an indefinite number of other writers who happen in a greater or less degree to contribute to newspapers, magazines, and quarterlies, but of whom we should find it difficult to say that they might not with equal success have taken up some other line instead of that which they have actually chosen. It is, however, of the former class that we now wish to speak.

It would be difficult, at least in England, where newspaper-writing is anonymous, to say who especially have been the typical newspaper writers. But of writers in quarterlies Lord Jeffrey is, *facile princeps*, the model, the central type. Not that he was the ablest, or anything like the ablest, of those who have given their thoughts to the world through this medium. To go no further than the *Edinburgh Review*, both Sydney Smith and Lord Macaulay were much cleverer men, and their articles were much cleverer articles than those of Jeffrey. But it may be doubted whether they produced so great an immediate effect, whether their influence as reviewers over their contemporaries was felt equally with that of Jeffrey; and it is quite beyond question that Jeffrey's power was far greater, in proportion to his ability, than was theirs. Sydney Smith and Macaulay, had they even been wholly debarred from reviewing, would perhaps have produced an effect on the world not inferior to that which has in fact resulted from their efforts. But Jeffrey, had he not been a reviewer, and moreover a quarterly reviewer, would have been nobody. Here he was precisely in his place; he had the very qualities which made him, not indeed the real leader, but the recognised arbiter of his generation in literary judgments. He was emphatically not a man of genius; he had no overpowering instinct, no inspiration, not even any special insight or enthusiasm. But he had an ever watchful common sense, a sympathy with progress and with all forms of thought not too violently eccentric, generosity of temper, and guardedness of expression. And hence, while the attacks of the *Quarterly* on Keats and Tennyson produced no lasting effect whatever, the attacks of Jeffrey on Wordsworth produced a great and continued effect. It is impossible to read them even now without admiration for their neatness and plausibility; essentially unjust, they yet escape the condemnation of injustice, from the evident candour of the

writer, the impossibility of charging him with any bad passion, with anything beyond a deficient feeling for the poetic faculty exerting itself in certain new and somewhat startling directions. To Coleridge, indeed, and to him alone, Jeffrey was more positively unfair.

Suppose even so slight a change as that Jeffrey had written in a magazine instead of a quarterly review, he could never have had the same influence; his want of liveliness, which, as it was, helped him to gain a character for judicial impartiality, would then have been a hindrance to him. The typical magazine writers are Professor Wilson and De Quincey; and which is the most typical it would perhaps be hard to say. Here, again, there are other magazine writers who cannot be reckoned inferior in ability to Wilson or De Quincey, who yet are by no means equally characteristic in this particular respect. Some, for instance, of Mr. Carlyle's most brilliant productions appeared first in magazines; but their having so appeared was in a sense accidental—they might just as well have come out as a complete book at once. But the stamp of the magazine is on everything written by either Wilson or De Quincey.

Unlike Jeffrey, both of these two were men of genius. Moreover, while their most salient characteristics were startlingly dissimilar, the subtler qualities of their genius were by no means unlike. A fine and beautiful irony expressed itself equally through the apparent animalism of the one and the apparent egotism of the other. Wilson, at first sight, seems a mere boy; you cannot read through ten pages of him without finding some rollicking piece of bodily exercise, some audacious joke, some highly appreciative notice of the pleasures of eating and drinking. He tears over the mountains; he clears twenty-three feet in a single leap (this a real piece of sober fact); he has a perfectly voracious appetite, and an unlimited capacity for toddy. He hurls abusive epithets at his political and poetical adversaries with a most surprising vigour. But a real delicacy of nature lies beneath this outward show, and reveals itself in time. He has the trick of returning back upon himself, and making amends for some unusually caustic piece of criticism by a generous surrender. Nowhere is this more remarkable than in his review of the early productions of Tennyson, which in many parts, as is well known, is by no means sparing in its censure (and, to say the truth, deservedly so), yet ends with these words, after quoting some of the more beautiful pieces of the poet:—"Looking over

our article, we see that the whole merit of it lies in the extracts, which are beautiful exceedingly." And, in fact, there were few men in whom Wilson could not discern some merit. To Jeffrey and Brougham, widely as he differed from them, he was gracefully courteous. Even Mr. Tupper, whose portentous continuation of *Christabel* now lies embalmed in the *Essays of Christopher North*, like a fly in amber, was not dismissed by him without some measure of encouragement; and though Mr. Tupper has since proved most conclusively to the world his possession of a thickness of skin on which neither satire nor encouragement is of any avail, it can hardly be laid to Wilson's charge, as a fault, that he did not foresee the eccentric and uncouth developments of that remarkable person. To some writers, indeed, Wilson was far too indulgent, and, from his reverence for religion, especially indulgent to those who wrote in a religious strain. Mr. Bowles's heavy, dull, violent tracts in verse, full of everything a poem should not have, void of everything that a poem should have, were treated by him with a respect that at the present day seems quite unaccountable. On the other hand, what a model of satire is his review of Sir Humphry Davy's *Salmonia*! We know of hardly any other instance of a satire so severe, and so justly severe, in which yet the person satirized is treated, not merely without virulence or animosity, but without even the assumption of superiority on the part of the satirist, with a true gentlemanliness and dignity of tone concealing itself beneath inextinguishable laughter. And if a certain want of generosity is to be imputed to him in his criticisms of Leigh Hunt and what he called the "Cockney" school, he made amends for it by a fuller appreciation afterwards.

The great charm of Wilson, as of all humourists, is the contrast between the superficial aspects of his nature and those undercurrents which he appears studiously to shroud, and which reveal themselves only to the more careful observer. Where we had thought there was nothing but physical enjoyment, suddenly is seen to be thought and spirituality. Nature, instead of being to him a servant of all work, is truly a divine goddess, the opener of secret things; his loud talking in her presence is but a veil to hide what he feels from the vulgar. The pure animalist, the pure sentimentalist, and the pure cynic are alike unbearable; but the man who can combine them in the proper proportion will affect others deeply and enduringly. Genuinely to do so needs great grasp of mind; nor indeed can they be com-

bined in precisely equal proportions consistently with unity of endeavour. Some one must be the predominant and true motive, while the others represent past or superficial modes of feeling, which are only not laid aside because they serve as channels of communication and mutual understanding between the writer and other men. Now in Wilson the animalist is apparently and in outward show predominant, but the sentimentalist really so — using the word sentiment not in an invidious sense, but as signifying sympathy with some past or external mode of feeling; while cynicism is never put on by him except as a transparent mockery, in a spirit of audacious bravado, amusing from its very incongruousness.

De Quincey also was a humourist — a compound of the sentimentalist and the cynic; and in him also the sentimentalist must, on the whole, be held to have predominated. Though cynicism was to him something more than an outward veil or superficial feeling, it entered more deeply into his nature than animalism did into Wilson's. The famous *Essay on Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts* is one of the masterpieces of cynicism; and the humour of it consists in this cynicism being suppressed and ignored by the writer, who pretends to take his stand as a sentimentalist, as a sympathizer with those modes of feeling which the fine arts arouse in those who study them. And yet, when one has penetrated through the superficial sentimentalism to the underlying stratum of cynicism, there is seen in the far distance yet another frame of mind which denies or throws doubt on the reality of the cynicism, and thereby renders it bearable. De Quincey's nature was indeed a complicated one. Who can forget the little touches in his essays on Wordsworth and Coleridge, by which, in the middle of his exuberant floods of admiration for those great poets, he suddenly checks himself into coldness, and into what would be called sarcasm were it not so slight and fleeting, seeming to say, "After all, you need not be so much surprised; these men had a great deal of luck, and a certain knack, but at bottom they were men like you or me, and had some very prosaic qualities indeed." No doubt it was the consciousness of his own great powers, the greatness of which was comparatively unrecognised, that caused this sudden stopping of his enthusiasm. For in England, even more than in any other country, it is simplicity and direct force of aim that gains a man power and reputation. A man whose desires and purposes are complex, however much they may testify to his ability, stands here at a great

disadvantage compared with one whose range is comparatively limited, but who knows what he wants, and strikes straight at the point. Thus it is that Wordsworth has attained a higher reputation than Coleridge, who, beyond doubt, had the more comprehensive nature. And it was from this cause that De Quincey was, in public estimation, disregarded in comparison with men who had not a tithe of his subtle insight, but who let their real purpose be plainly apparent. The only perfectly simple things that De Quincey ever wrote were his Autobiographic Sketches, and these are indeed exquisite; they remind one of Charles Lamb, and, with less concentration, have in some respects the charm of a yet greater freshness.

The audacity which strikes the reader of both Wilson and De Quincey is closely allied to their humour, which enabled them to say the most startling things without offence, since they had continually in reserve an undercurrent of meaning, perceptible by the intelligent, and which, as in the case of a man whose looks insinuate something different from his words, hinted very clearly, "You are to take all this *cum grano*." Herein they are contrasted with Sydney Smith, whose witty and startling combinations of ideas never hinted any other meaning than that which he expressed in his ordinary language. It is, in fact, in this that the much-talked-of distinction between wit and humour consists; the contrasts and surprises which are the essence of a witty observation are contrasts between things purely external to the speaker, whereas the humourist has a perpetual contrast or antagonism between different parts of his own nature.

The beginning of this century was the time when periodical writing flourished in England more than ever before or since. Now, it is nearly a lost art; or at least almost the only man who possesses it is Mr. Matthew Arnold. For periodical writing is to literature what conversation is to speech; it should not be too personal, nor too scientific, nor too earnest, but a mixture of all these, the play of fancy over all subjects, lighting up here and there their depths, but not grappling with them, pouring itself abroad but not contracting itself to any too determinate aim. It is the fluid which sup-

plies the electric and magnetic currents whereby the solid and fixed forms are blended into a whole. Perfect freedom is its essence. Moreover, it is a social kind of writing; it is done far better when many persons of harmonious views and dispositions unite, than by a solitary thinker. And at the present day the impulse of English minds is entirely towards concentration and earnestness and definiteness of thought; this has come in a variety of ways, but principally through the influence of such men as Mr. Mill, Mr. Carlyle, Dr. Newman, and Dr. Arnold—men differing in all respects but this, that they had an intense certainty of their meaning, and impressed the necessity of such certainty on others. But flexibility, which is the very opposite of this intense certainty, is the peculiar excellence of periodical writing. And the padding (appropriately so named now—but who would have thought of terming the Essay on Murder padding?) of all existing magazines is tame even in the best specimens (we again except Mr. Arnold); sometimes useful, as supplying statistics or thought, but quenching life and spirit as certainly as carbonic acid gas. Does laughter or light satire ever ring through the solemn precincts of *Macmillan*? Do the apostles of the *Fortnightly* ever introduce a joke into their evangelical discourses? Mr. Frederic Harrison, if we remember right, attempted it some little time ago; but he did it with so preternaturally solemn a tone, and with such earnestness of asseveration that he did not really mean to joke at all, that all fear of the risk that the attempt might be repeated was at once removed.

However, there is no need to despair. One era passes away, and another comes up, and if nothing else in the world recurs, the moods and tempers of men do so. We have passed from Addison to Dr. Johnson, and from Dr. Johnson to De Quincey, and from De Quincey to the present day. Let us hope that English literature may yet recover from the "malady of thought"—of thought that is, exclusive and despotic—and regain that fine balance of thought and feeling, of diffusiveness and concentration, of impulse and defined purpose, which marks an epoch and a flowering time in the history of a nation.

From The Examiner.

Life of Sir John Richardson. By the Rev. John McLraith, Minister of the English Reformed Church at Amsterdam. Longmans.

IF the Decline and Fall of the British Empire should ever come to be written by some historian of the future, the chapter which treats of the Expeditions to the Arctic regions will not be its least interesting portion. Nothing so well and truly illustrates the best elements of British character. The resolution and perseverance which have borne and maintained the English race over so many portions of the earth have nowhere been more conspicuous than in the search for the North-West Passage. Equal courage and determination may have been displayed on other fields of English energy, but in none have they been accompanied with less of those haughty and overbearing qualities which sometimes degrade courage into cruelty, and determination into oppression. A laudable ambition, a love of adventure, and a passion to penetrate the unknown were the motives that actuated the resolute and hardy men who, in succession, faced the austere rigours of the extreme North. To force her secrets from nature at the certain loss of ordinary comforts and probably of life itself, was an object worthy of British effort; and although the success of the achievement is not likely to be attended with any practical advantage, it is satisfactory to know that the problem of a North-West Passage, which had so long tantalised geographers and navigators, has been at length solved.

The close of the great Napoleonic war left many active spirits disengaged, and the energy and activity which it had called forth would naturally seek for employment elsewhere. Accordingly we find Mr. Richardson, after spending his early years as Naval Assistant-Surgeon on board of the *Nymph*, the *Hercule*, the *Blossom*, the *Bombay*, and the *Cruiser*, and settling down, as he thought, to civil life and matrimony, accepting the post of Surgeon and Naturalist to the first overland expedition to the Polar Sea (1819-1822). In the interval between the paying off of the *Cruiser* and his Arctic appointment, Mr. Richardson visited America, took out his diploma of M. D. and married. Having been born in 1787, near Dumfries, he was thirty-two years of age when he sailed on the Expedition, which he considered the turning point of his life, and for which he gave up his home and practice at Leith. The command of the Expedition was given to Lieut. Franklin, and his companions were Mr., afterwards Sir G. Back, and Mr R.

Hood, who met with an untimely end during the Expedition. Writing to his father a few days before starting, Dr. Richardson says:

"The hope of acquiring the power of rendering her [his wife] more comfortable, and the possibility of obtaining some portion of fame and proving myself worthy of her affection are the inducements which I have to undertake the Expedition, and are the only motives strong enough to enable me to endure so long an absence."

The vessel in which the party started, the *Prince of Wales*, left Gravesend on the 23rd May, 1819, and after a stormy passage they arrived at York Factory, where they found the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-West Fur Company fighting about their hunting-grounds and killing off the natives with drink. From York Factory the explorers pushed on to Cumberland House, where they passed the winter. In a letter from this place to his wife, dated March 6, 1820, he writes:

"When I began my letter, I thought of the pleasure you must be feeling, as an admirer of the works of God, in perceiving the earth bursting its frozen bands, and vegetation putting forth her powers. The joy, the exultation I have felt on such an occasion, was fresh in my mind, and I could not but contrast it with the depression produced by a winter unusually extended. Winter, in unspotted livery, surrounds us. The snow covers the ground to the depth of three feet, and the trees bend under their ponderous load. If we pass the threshold of our hut, and enter the forest, a stillness so profound prevails, that we are ready to start at the noise created by the pressure of our feet on the snow. The screams of a famished raven, or the crash of a lofty pine, rending through the intenseness of the frost, are the only sounds that invade the solemn silence. When in my walks I have accidentally met one of my companions in this dreary solitude, his figure, emerging from the shade, has conveyed, with irresistible force, to my mind, the idea of a being rising from the grave. I have often admired the pictures our great poets have drawn of absolute solitude, but never felt their full force till now. What must be the situation of a human being, 'alone on the wide, wide sea!' How dreadful if without faith in God! An atheist could not dwell alone in the forests of America.

"I must not, however, go on writing in this strain; there are yet two months of winter to come, and I must endeavour to acquire and preserve that contentment which can render every situation tolerable. A thousand consolations offer themselves to one who is disposed to look for them."

On the return of fine weather the party left Cumberland House and reached Fort Enterprise on Aug. 19, 1820; having trav-

elled 1,350 miles. Here Dr. Richardson learned that his father had died, and in a letter to his mother he gives expression to his feelings in language full of affection, resignation, and piety. After wintering at Fort Enterprise the party set out on June 4, 1821, for the Coppermine river and the sea, accompanied by some Canadian *voyageurs*. On the 21st of July they commenced their voyage in two canoes on the Arctic sea, and continued it till the 16th of August, having sailed over 555 geographical miles. Reaching Point Turnagain, they felt that to proceed any farther would be to risk the loss of the whole Expedition. On the return they encountered cold, famine, and fatigue. Mr. Hood was unable to direct the way, Franklin was in the rear, and Richardson took the lead, Back being in advance with the hunters trying to obtain game. The men in charge of the canoe were unable or unwilling to carry it any farther, and when they struck on the banks of the Coppermine, they were without the means of recrossing it. Several days were spent in constructing a raft, and as they were without any appliances for impelling it to the opposite bank against the wind, Richardson volunteered to swim across the stream with a line and haul the raft over. Benumbed by cold he sank in the river and was drawn back in an insensible state, from which he recovered by being wrapped up in blankets and placed before a fire of willows. At length the party crossed the river one by one in a little canoe formed of willows and covered with tent canvas. Back was immediately sent forward to Fort Enterprise with the strongest of the Canadians, to search for the Indians, and to send back aid. Mr. Hood was too feeble to keep pace with the others, and Dr. Richardson, and Hepburn, an old Orkney sailor, resolved to remain with him. The terrible sufferings endured by this small party, the murder of Mr. Hood by the Iroquois Michel who had come back from the party under Franklin, and the shooting of him in return by Dr. Richardson, having been already recorded in Dr. Richardson's journal, published in the 'Narrative of the First Overland Journey,' it is unnecessary to repeat the story here, though it is the most interesting portion of the volume. In after life Dr. Richardson appears to have been unwilling to recur to the circumstances under which he felt it necessary to deprive a fellow-creature of life, although he has detailed them at great length in his journal.

Weary and starving, Franklin and his companions arrived at Fort Enterprise, but

they found neither food nor Indians before them. A note from Back informed his commander that he had gone to seek the Indians, and to his energy, perseverance, and bravery the final deliverance of the whole party is mainly due. The much-needed supply of food reached Fort Enterprise on the 7th of November, and on the 16th they had so far recovered as to be able to push on for Fort Providence, at which point they were kindly received by the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company, and where they had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Back. Here they remained for five months, awaiting the coming of the spring to return home, which they did in October, 1822, having travelled in America, by land and water, including the Arctic sea voyage, a distance of 5,550 miles. The explorers were everywhere received with feelings of pride and thankfulness, and Dr. Richardson spent some happy years in the enjoyment of home affections and public respect.

The second expedition to the North, of which Franklin was also the chief and Dr. Richardson the surgeon, set sail from Liverpool on February 12, 1825, and returned to the same port in September, 1827, after an absence of two years, seven months and a half. Happily the party encountered none of those terrible trials that they experienced during the first Expedition. In 1831 Dr. Richardson lost his wife, and in 1832, when fears began to exist about the safety of the expedition under Captain Ross, we find him urging the Admiralty to fit out a searching party, but in vain. He now applied himself with energy to his duties of surgeon to Melville Hospital, and in 1833 he married his second wife, Miss Booth, a niece of Franklin. On her recovery from a long illness after the birth of her first child, he writes, "I am so well and happy I can scarcely help jumping for joy." She died, however, in 1845, and two years after Dr. now Sir John, Richardson married his third partner, a Miss Fletcher, of Edinburgh. In the early part of 1847, anxiety began to be felt for the safety of Sir John Franklin's Expedition in the *Erebus* and *Terror*. Whilst a guest with Lady Richardson at the house of Lady Franklin in Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, he received a note from the Admiralty, dated February 21st, informing him that up to September 27, 1847, no intelligence of Franklin's Expedition had reached the Sandwich Islands, and that all hope of tidings of the missing ships by way of the Pacific had come to an end. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Fletcher, was also in London at this time, and her journal contains the following entry:

"We dined with Lady Franklin on February 24, to meet the Richardsons who were staying with her. A larger party assembled in the evening, among whom was Thomas Carlyle, whom we were glad to meet again. He was sitting close by me, and chatting pleasantly, when Dr. Boott came into the room and advanced towards me, with even more than usual brightness in his fine countenance, saying, "Louis Philippe has fled, and France has declared herself a Republic." There was a dead silence. Carlyle threw himself back in his chair, clasped his hands, burst into a loud laugh, and left the room. We did not see him again. The rest of the party gathered round Dr. Boott to hear every particular which he had collected from the evening papers."

On the 26th March, 1848, Sir J. Richardson started from Liverpool in search of Franklin. He associated with him in this expedition Dr. Rae, who afterwards succeeded in discovering those relics of the Franklin Expedition, which left no doubt of its unfortunate and tragic fate. The winter of 1848 was spent at Fort Confidence, in the neighbourhood of the Hare Indians, the Dog Rihs, and the Copper Indians. The following extract from a letter written in this remote region of frost and snow strangely connects Fort Confidence with Kennington Common and the EXAMINER:

"My latest English news left you in London, on the eve of the threatened meeting on Kennington Common. I trust that it was not held, and that no riots ensued. By the return of the messenger who takes this to Fort Simpson (only twenty-five days' march off, and we look for him, therefore, in six weeks after he leaves us), I hope to hear that you travelled safely and comfortably to Lancrigg, and that Mary, with her charge, speedily followed; that you enjoy your 'Examiner' as you inhale the balmy air flowing through the open window into the pleasantest of drawing-rooms, and discuss the revolutions of Europe, as is your wont, with all the freshness of youthful hope."

After an absence of nineteen months Sir J. Richardson returned to England, and received a letter from the Admiralty expressing approbation of his conduct. He could obtain no traces of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, but he had the satisfaction of having done his duty, and of leaving the search in the hands of the man who succeeded in establishing the fact of Sir John Franklin's death.

The latter portion of Sir J. Richardson's life was devoted to excursions in his native Scotland, to a visit to Italy, and to a pretty constant attendance at the meetings of the British Association. To him we are in-

debted for extending our knowledge of the physical geography, the Flora and Fauna, of British America. Up to the very close of his life he was engaged on some useful work. His end was sudden and unexpected. It took place on the 5th of June, 1865, and is thus described by his biographer:

Monday, June 5, was a lovely soft June day, and Sir John spent the forenoon in quietly superintending some work in the garden. After luncheon, he and Lady Richardson drove to Ambleside and Rydal, making their first call at Dr. Davy's and last at Fox How, where they remained for some time, as Mrs. Arnold was about to go from home. Looking out on the lovely scenery, in its fresh June beauty, Sir John remarked that he wondered they could leave it.

In the evening, he worked an hour or two at Wickliffe, and at ten o'clock read, at family worship, the seventh chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. He then stood for a short time at the window, and said, "We shall have the moon full, in our drive to Ambleside on Wednesday," kissed his daughter and wished her good night, took from the table King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of the 'History of the World by Orosius,' lighted his candle and walked off with a firm step, which sounded along the passage as that of a man in the full vigour of life. About eleven o'clock, Lady Richardson went up-stairs. He was still awake, and spoke of his plans for the next day. A long aspiration followed, and he passed through death to life.

Thus calmly ended a life of almost unexampled activity and usefulness, uprightness, and humble faith. Of him, it may be said, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

From The Spectator.

ALEXANDER SMITH.*

IN the very fresh and genial memoir prefixed to this collection of posthumous pieces, Mr. Alexander draws with much skill the picture of a man whose sense of the fitness of things seemed latterly to operate as a fatal hindrance to the production of poetry worthy to live, whose exquisite social qualities, passive though they were, made everybody who knew him forget entirely his pretensions to the laurel, and who really might have done greater things if he had been a sourer-tempered fellow. It will astonish

* *Last Leaves. Sketches and Criticisms.* By Alexander Smith, author of *A Life Drama*. Edited, with a Memoir, by P. F. Alexander, M. A., Author of *Mill and Carlyle*, &c. Edinburgh: Nimmo.

many people to hear this description of one otherwise known to them as the leading scholar of what is now universally known as the "spasmodic" school of poetry. Smith was the very converse of the hero of the *Life Drama*. He took no eagle flights sunward, croaking hoarsely of gods and fame. He disputed with no man on subjects connected with the universe generally. He preferred Nature's domestic aspect to her volcanic one; he exhibited no fine frenzy over wrong, social or political. His real "life drama," indeed, was a prosy after-piece, with here and there a sweet glimpse of nature; but chiefly got up, without new and startling scenery, by the aid of the old stock "interiors," or "flats," representing the conventional woodland. Amiable almost to a fault, Smith found it impossible to persevere in a literary manufacture which he, perhaps, began under a mistaken notion of his own sympathies; since throughout his life he preferred Chaucer and the story-tellers to Shelley and the speculative innovators, Lamb and the essayists to Coleridge and the metaphysicians. At the age of thirty, when the poetic temperament should flash most deeply and brightly, he was noting his few grey hairs in the looking-glass, and sighing over lost illusions in the true spirit of paterfamilias. He ended as a writer of essays, very pleasant, very sleepy, full of the "cui bono?" and really admirable as expressing the mood of mind which takes Providence for granted, and is susceptible to no influence in particular.

All this is quite clear on Mr. Alexander's showing, and it is truly very touching, for although the excellent biographer pictures to us a thoroughly happy nature, a spirit quite without gall, a mind far too much at ease to care for speculation, we cannot think that this completes the portrait. Indeed, we have a hint of the truth in the following passage:—

"When I knew him in his early days, an occasional mood of gloom and abstraction might be noted in him, and half suspecting him at times of doing the 'Author of the *Life Drama*' upon us, I took the liberty to quiz him accordingly when we had become sufficiently intimate. (I need not say how completely, on farther acquaintance, I acquitted him of any such affectation.) In his later time, these moods slight and transient as they were, had quite disappeared, and he was eminently and at all times a cheery presence; though, by nature *au fond*, I should suppose him to have been always a somewhat brooding, meditative, and sad man. This only revealed itself, however, in the pleasant reaction and protest of *humour*, which was one of the ruling qualities of his mind, and, had he lived,

would probably more and more have announced itself dominant."

Perhaps the clue to the puzzle is physiological. It is carefully noted that Smith's forehead indicated an extraordinary mass of brain, and the frequent flashes of real genius betokened how much that brain could have effected, had the proper natural stimulus been supplied by a more irritable set of nerves. It is one thing to say that a man is lymphatic, as Smith was, another thing to say that he is happy-minded. The lymphatic man, undemonstrative, acquiescent, torpid in feature, hides not seldom in his heart the restless flame of dissatisfaction and disease, the more terribly fatal because it is so passive. In the story of Smith's life there is a clear margin for bitterness. There was the sense of power, as well as the sense of inertia, the feeling that that large capacity, equal to so much, had become terribly at the mercy of a temperament exhausted by so little. Everywhere in the later poems, but particularly in the little essays, we feel through the mood of pleasant acquiescence the breath of weariness, and even of pain.

But the picture must not end even here. Had Smith been a little more above the urgent necessities of life, had he been freer to stimulate his faculties by physical means, not only might he have been with us now, but his voice might actually have reached the great poetic compass. We cordially agree with Mr. Alexander that he was shabbily and cruelly treated, particularly by those very people who were the first to run riot in sounding his praises, and the first to forsake him when the fit of applause was over; and, moreover, we quite endorse the remark that the change was totally unwarrantable on literary grounds, seeing that Smith's second book was an unmistakable advance upon his first—better in purpose, more coherent in execution, fuller of the right kind of promise. "Glasgow" is a true lyric, and there are descriptions in the "Boy's Poem" equal to anything of the sort in literature. Indeed, on dispassionately reperusing Smith's books, we find great occasion for regret that the writer's poetic career was virtually terminated so soon. There is, without original conception, a marked *manner*, which would have grown more and more fascinating as the life-mood deepened,—and really did grow to some extent, if we are to judge by the little "Spring Chanson," now first printed, which is clear, sweet, and beautiful, quite the finest thing Smith ever wrote.

As for that question of plagiarism, revived with some excusable bitterness by

Mr. Alexander, it is of total insignificance, except as exhibiting the danger of consulting the general public on a question of artistic workmanship. A rival bard thought fit to make out a list of petty larcenies against Smith, and to take the public verdict on the matter, quite certain, of course, that the public in its ignorance could be hoodwinked on this subject as easily as a mixed jury on any difficult point of equity. The mean charge was dismissed by the competent, but swallowed holus-bolus by a mass of readers; and the injury to Smith's reputation was enormous. It is too late for regret now, but the "gentleman" who did this business has possibly had much to do in shortening the poet's days. The sudden and cruel change of opinion must have cut deep, though no wound was shown, and disgust supervening, possibly confirmed the lymphatic habit into fatal reticence. While freely admitting that Smith's first book was assimilative to a degree almost unwarrantable, we find no ground even there for the accusation of deliberate manufacture, and every ground for the belief that the writer would develop (as he really did within limitations) into a minor poet. In fact, all this story of Smith's poetic career reads very badly indeed, and gives us new occasion to look with pity and fear on the sunniest public favourite.

As for the *Last Leaves*, they are well worth reading; but the best thing in the book is the memoirs. Mr. Alexander has acquitted himself to admiration of the most difficult and delicate of tasks,—that of writing simply and kindly the biography of a personal friend, and his work will be appreciated best by those who have made similar attempts, or contemplated most critically the innumerable inflated "memoirs" and priggish "biographies" which swarm in literature. In a style easy and colloquial, indeed almost loose, he discusses his theme, and in no instance exceeds or falls short of his duty in his peculiar position as friend and biographer. He has already done well in his own person, as the facetious critic of Mill and imitator of Carlyle, and we are now shown that he can be generous as well as ingenious, tender as well as witty.

PORTER'S PASTORAL.

We find in an English paper the following lively piece:—

SINCE Mr. Seward, when the Russian treaty was under discussion, described the Rosy Polar Arcadia, where the slopes of the icebergs were

clad in perpetual verdure, and the walrus disported in the flowery meads, and tropical monkeys gambolled in the enows, or Mr. Sumner grew eloquent over the Sitkan codfish, and the lettuce and chicory of Aliaska, no more beautiful pastoral poem has been given to the world than the lovely piece which Admiral Porter has just written about St. Thomas. While so many of his gallant shipmates are forced to leave their sweet pastures and domestic joys, and are tossed about by raging seas, caught up by whirlwinds, hurled through the angry air, wrecked and drowned in Mr. Seward's chosen harbour of refuge itself, the gallant Admiral, recumbent 'neath the shade of the United States Naval Academy, like a seafaring Tityrus, pipes his rustic lay. His song begins in the stately strain of a gazetteer, but the fire of inspiration soon kindles in his veins; the movement quickens; the impetuous numbers flow headlong forth, knocking each other into all sorts of corners, and filling the brain with bewildering visions of waving palms, yellow-haired mermaids, dry-docks, steamboats, bananas, rum punch, fortifications, trade winds, parrots, Parrott guns, plantations, and coal-yards. Regarded simply as a terrestrial paradise, the island of St. Thomas is considerably ahead of the Garden of Eden, while as a naval station it is immeasurably superior to any seaport since Tyre and Sidon. Beside the charms of its tropical scenery, it has the additional advantage of being inhabited by a colony of prosperous marine-store dealers. It has three or more harbours, each one of which is better than any of the others. It is "an enchanting place to cruise in," especially during a hurricane. There are shops where you can buy things. It is a good naval station. Up on the hill there are nice little cottages, and everybody who is rich enough buys one of them. They do this because it is too hot to live anywhere else. The island is surrounded by reefs and breakers. All the shopkeepers' clerks are negroes. St. Thomas is a good naval station. Strangers always have capital fun when they go there. The Government is strictly republican in form, and closely resembles our own, all the officers, except two or three, being appointed by the King of Denmark. The most beautiful sight in the world is the town and harbour of St. Thomas, seen from the hill above it. Also the most beautiful sight in the world is the town and harbour of St. Thomas viewed from the sea. You can take in coal there very rapidly. Another advantage is that if a hostile army should land on the island they would immediately starve to death, there being no food and very little water. The inhabitants exercise a princely hospitality, and make up for the want of water by a liberal use of other beverages. If we bought the property we should have a rare opportunity of building forts, docks, coal-sheds, and navy-yards, there being no improvements whatever upon the estate. Thus St. Thomas would become the paradise of contractors, as it is already of ship-chandlers and dealers in second-hand clothing

and dirk-knives. Moreover, it is a good naval station. It would make a delightful watering-place. New York merchants might send their families there in the summer, and run down every Saturday afternoon for their Sunday holiday. The healthiness of the place, the poet confesses, is "doubtful;" but it is a singular fact that, however deadly the climate may be to other people, it invariably spares citizens (native or naturalized) of the United States; and any man who has been registered as a voter in any part of the Union may go to St. Thomas not only without fear of getting sick, but with a certain prospect of being cured of any ailments he may have had beforehand. The epidemics to which the natives are subject are attributed to the evaporation of English coal. But if we went there we should have American coal, which is not in the habit of evaporating. There is a hill from which one gets a very pretty view of ships passing through the Anegada passage. The land scenery would be fine, only, unfortunately, all the trees have been cut down; but there are cactuses and prickly pears, and many other funny plants, which are very amusing to look at. Finally, it is a good naval station.

So the gallant commander sings away, and the little midshipmen, we suppose, sit in order round, and listen to his flowery verse. And so

America vindicates her claim not only to possess the best Government, but to produce the best Government poetry out of the worst material of any nation on the earth. Mr. Seward found beauty in the polar bear; Mr. Sumner drew inspiration from train oil, pine trees, and cannibals; and now, amid the rumble of earthquakes, the bellowing of volcanoes, the shriek of the whirlwind, the crash of timbers, and the roar of the angry waters, our sentimental sailor pipes his pastoral notes on a boatswain's whistle, and makes us a most elegant little song out of the uproar of the warring elements. We have never seen the equal of this achievement, except, perhaps, now and then at the theatres, where, when the thunder has rolled, and the red and blue lightning flashed, and devils come up out of the deep, and gone down again with their victims into yawning abysses, and everything for a while been one demnition crash and bang, and hullabaloo, the canvas has rolled away and a flood of rosy light been poured upon the grand transformation scene, where all the fairies appear crowned with glory, and fountains trickle, and the rouge, and the tinsel, and the sawdust calves, and the pink tights are wrapped in heavenly halo, and the virtuous young shepherd goes up into the fies with a smile of bliss, for all the world like Admiral Porter.

THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW" ON THE BIBLE.—The *Edinburgh Review*, referring to the space which the Bible occupies in the history of literature, says:—"We see nothing like it, and it may well perplex the infidel to account for it; nor need his sagacity disdain to enter a little more deeply into its possible causes than he is usually inclined to do. It has not been given to any other book of religion thus to triumph over national prejudices, and lodge itself securely in the heart of great communities, varying by every conceivable diversity of language, race, manners, customs, and indeed agreeing in nothing but a veneration for itself. It adapts itself with facility to the revolutions of thought and feeling which shake to pieces all things else, and flexibly accommodates itself to the progress of society and the changes of civilization. Even conquests—the disorganization of old nations, the formation of new—do not affect the continuity of its empire. It lays hold of the new as of the old, and transmigrates with the spirit of humanity, attracting to itself by its own moral power in all the communities it enters a ceaseless intensity of effort for its propagation, illustration, and defence. Other systems of religion are usually delicate exotics, and will not bear transplanting; but if the Bible be false, the facility with which it overleaps the otherwise impassable boundaries of race and clime, and domiciliates itself among so many different nations, is assuredly a far more striking and wonderful proof of human ignorance, perverseness, and stupidity than is afforded in the limited preva-

lence of even the most abject superstitions; or if it really has merits which, though a fable, have enabled it to impose so comprehensively and variously on mankind, wonderful indeed must have been the skill in its composition, so wonderful that even the infidel himself ought never to regard it but with the profoundest reverence, as far too successful and sublime a fabrication to admit a thought of scoff and ridicule."

UTILIZATION OF COKE OVEN GASES.—Probably the first attempt to utilize the gases given off in the process of coking has been made at the works of Messrs. Carver & Co., of St. Etienne. The gases are collected, says the *Mining Journal*, and drawn off through pipes and cooled, when the tar ammoniacal liquids, &c., are condensed. From these condensed liquids benzine, naphthaline, sulphate of ammonia, artificial manures, and a number of dye-stuffs, are made. The gas remaining after condensation of the liquids, which is, of course, ordinary illuminating gas, can be used in the usual manner. It is estimated that in France alone no less than 4,000,000 tons of coal are annually coked, and it has been proved that Messrs. Carver's process is capable of giving a profit of nearly 2s. upon every ton of coal treated. A more conclusive evidence of the advantage resulting from that sound, technical education so readily obtainable on the Continent could scarcely be desired.